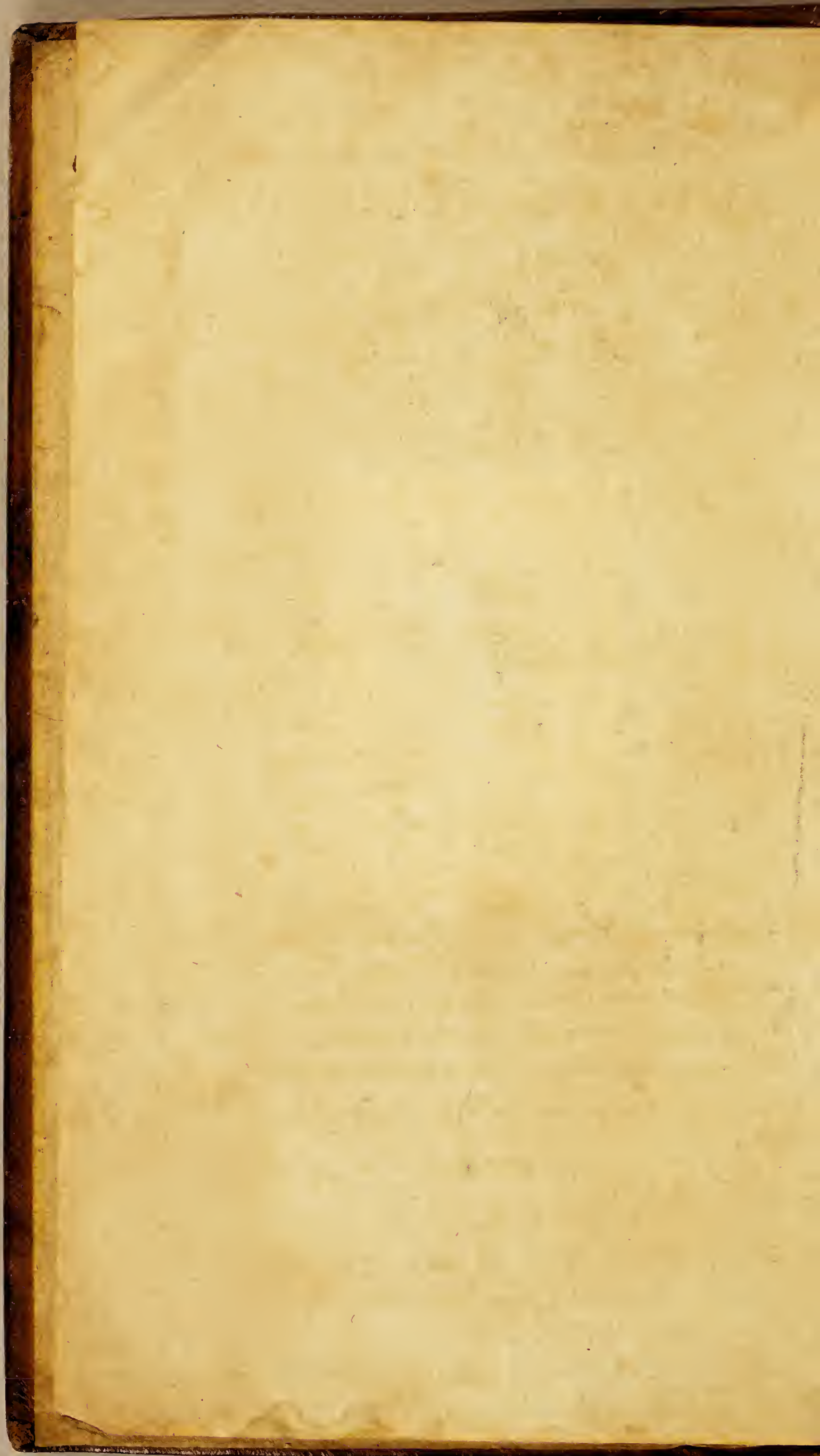


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THE
POWER OF RELIGION
ON
THE MIND,
IN
RETIREMENT, AFFLICTION,
AND AT
THE APPROACH OF DEATH:

Exemplified in the

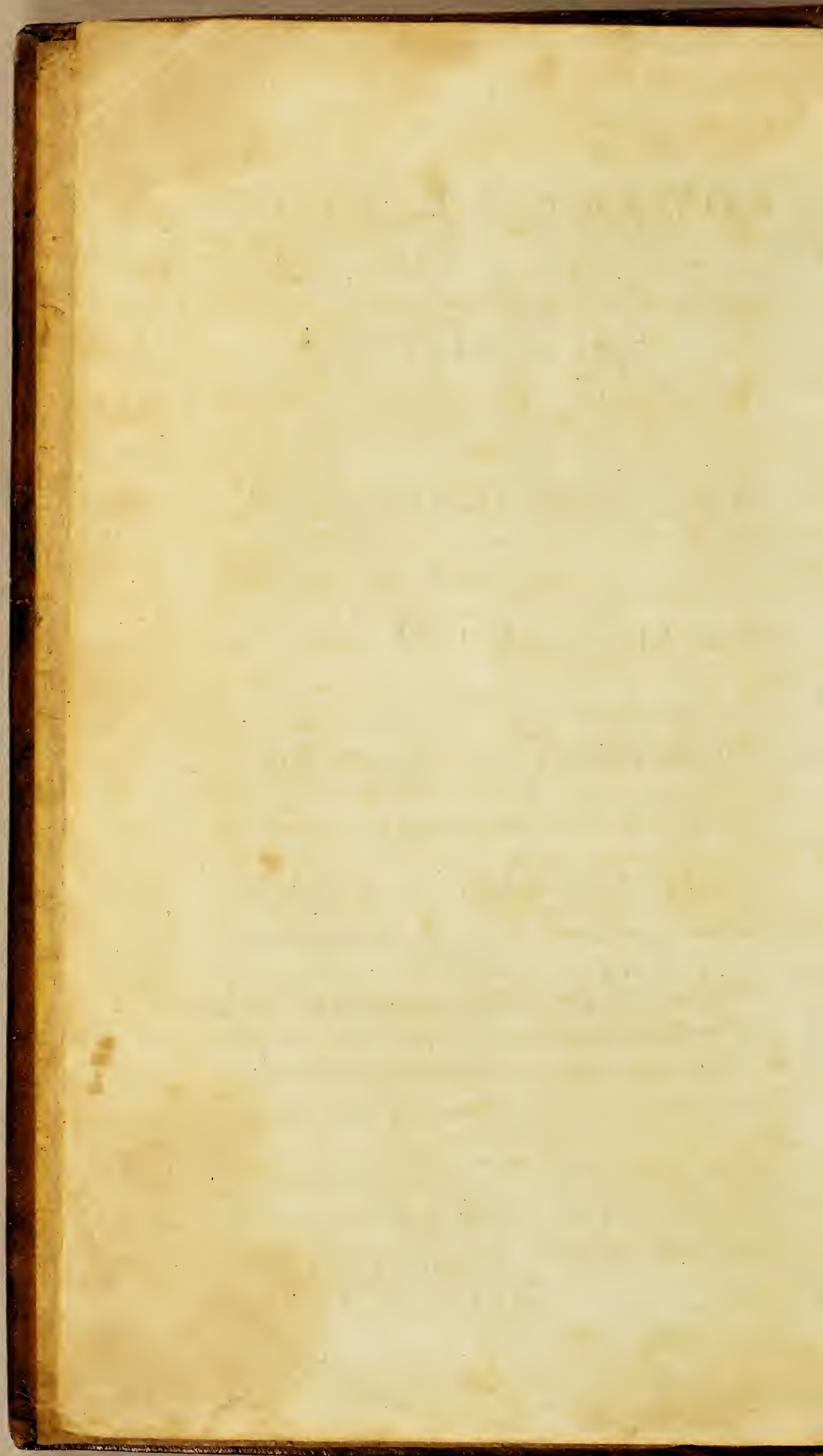
TESTIMONIES AND EXPERIENCE
OF PERSONS DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR
GREATNESS, LEARNING, OR VIRTUE.

'Tis immortality,—'tis that alone,
Amidst life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill. YOUNG.

THE SEVENTH EDITION, CORRECTED AND MUCH ENLARGED.

TRENTON:
PRINTED BY ISAAC COLLINS.

M. DCC. XCV.



INTRODUCTION.

THE following small collection was made, and is now produced, with a view to excite serious reflections on the unsatisfying and transitory nature of temporal enjoyments; and to promote a fervent concern for the attainment of that felicity which will be sure, complete, and permanent.

Piety and virtue, even when abstractedly considered, are truly amiable, and appear worthy of our earnest pursuit; but, when recommended by the lives and testimonies of eminent persons, who have known the world, and experienced the emptiness of its honours, wealth, and pleasures, they derive additional weight, and constrain us to acknowledge, that indeed it is our greatest happiness to be religious.

It is one of the many favours which a wise and gracious Providence hath conferred upon mankind, that in every country, and perhaps in almost every district throughout the earth, he has stationed some of his faithful servants, or returning prodigals, as witnesses of his power and goodness, and as encouragers to a life of purity, piety, and beneficence.

The following pages exhibit a few of those striking examples, which, in the quiet hour of reflection, may contribute to arrest the careless and wandering, to animate the sincere and concerned, and to convince or discountenance those, who have been unhappily led to oppose the highest truths, and to forsake the fountain of all their blessings.

May the consideration of these instances lead us to serious and timely reflections on our own condition, and to a profitable communion with the greatest and best of Beings, our divine and unerring Monitor; by which we shall experience a growing concern, that the end of our existence may be fully answered, and the favour of an Almighty Friend secured. May his gracious protection be witnessed at the close of our day, when the shadows of the evening shall approach, the glittering vanities of the world be obscured, and all its friendships and resources be found unavailing.

In that awful hour, this great support will not only preserve us from being distressed with mournful retrospects on the past, or with gloomy apprehensions of what is to come, but will afford the truest consolation of mind, and enable us to look forward, with animating hope, toward those happy regions of peace and joy, which shall then be allotted for our perpetual inheritance.

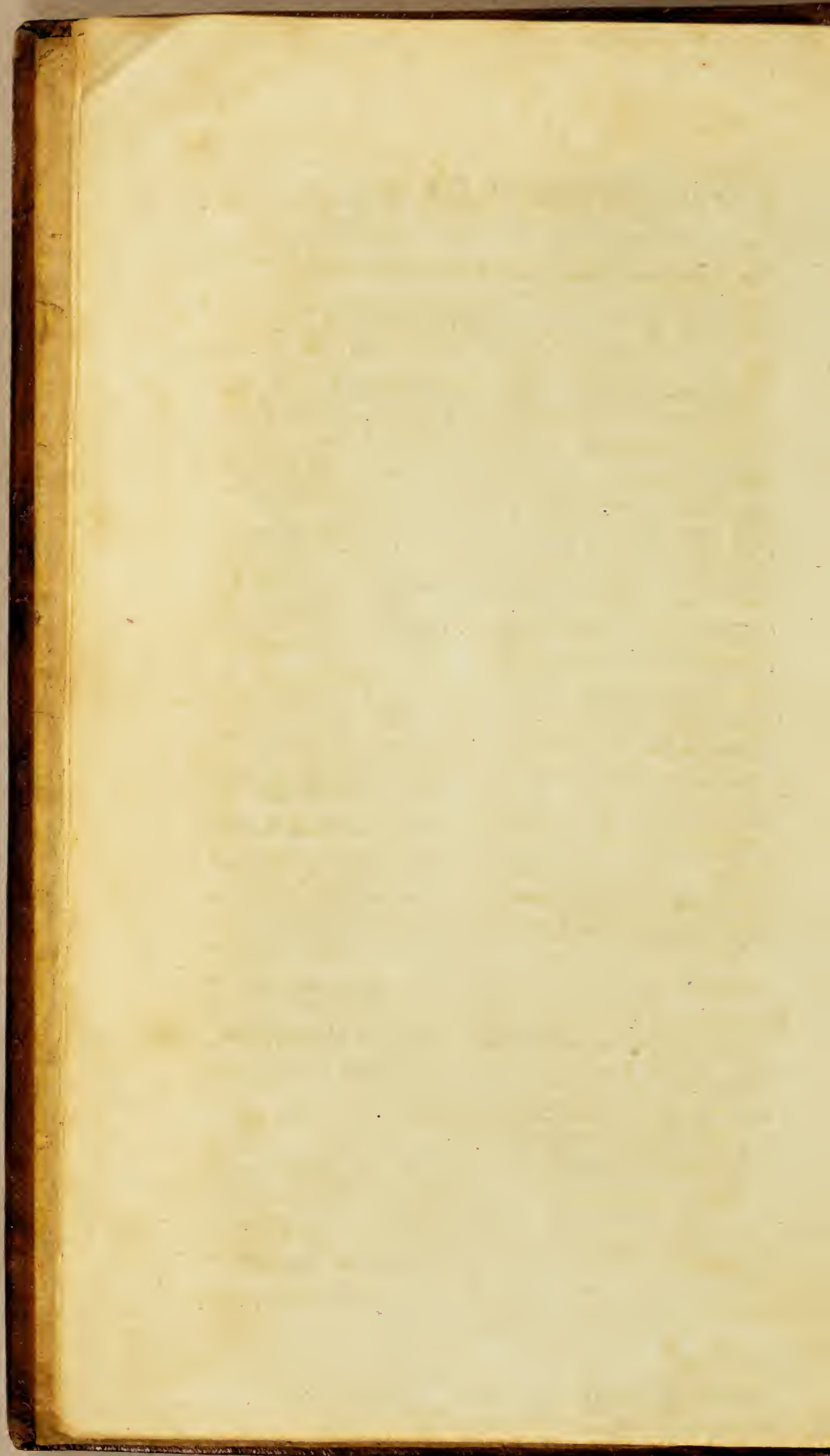
A D V E R T I S E M E N T

T O T H E

S I X T H E D I T I O N.

*T*HE Compiler of this Work having very considerably enlarged the present Edition, by the insertion of a number of additional characters and testimonies, the Bookseller will be under the necessity of advancing the price. But as the additions consist of many instances of female excellence, (in which the former editions were defective,) and of other instructive examples ; in the choice of which, the introduction of a suitable variety of matter has been carefully attended to ; the Editor hopes that these considerations will prove a sufficient apology for enhancing the price of the book : and the more so, as he receives no pecuniary advantage whatever from the publication.

Besides the enlargement of this edition, with an accession of fresh Characters, those of the preceding one have been corrected and extended, and the arrangement so conducted, as to coincide nearly with the order of time, and to diversify the whole.



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THE
POWER OF RELIGION
ON THE
MIND.

A TESTIMONY from the wise and experienced King SOLOMON, to the insufficiency of the most splendid possessions, and the greatest external prosperity, to produce true and permanent happiness, or to support and relieve the mind in seasons of distress, may suitably introduce these Memoirs.

This illustrious prince, who, at one season of his life, had flattered himself with great enjoyments from the world; and who, better than most men, could compute their amount, gives us the result of his experience in these memorable lines:——“ I said in my heart, I will
“ prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure:
“ fure: and behold, this also is vanity. I said

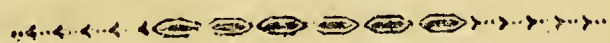
“ of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what
“ doth it? I made me great works, builded
“ houses, planted vineyards, made gardens and
“ orchards, planted trees in them of all kind of
“ fruit: I got me servants and maidens, also
“ great possessions: I gathered me silver and
“ gold, and the peculiar treasures of kings and
“ provinces; also men and women singers, and
“ the delights of the sons of men, as musical in-
“ struments, and that of all sorts. So I was
“ great, and increased more than all that were
“ before me in Jerusalem, and whatsoever mine
“ eyes desired, I kept not from them: I with-
“ held not mine heart from any joy. Then I
“ looked on the works which my hands had
“ wrought, and behold, all was vanity and vex-
“ ation of spirit.”

After this representation, he concludes with recommending the great end of our being, as that which will confer upon us here, the highest enjoyment and dignity of our nature, and prepare us for endless felicity hereafter:—“ Fear
“ God and keep his commandments, for this is
“ the whole duty of man: for God shall bring
“ every work into judgment, whether it be good,
“ or whether it be evil.”

IGNATIUS,

IGNATIUS, who lived within the first hundred years after Christ, (and who was torn in pieces by wild beasts at Rome, for his religion) left this saying, amongst others worthy of attention, behind him: — “ There is nothing better than “ the peace of a good conscience:”—intimating, there might be a peace to wicked consciences, that are past feeling any thing to be evil, being hardened in the wickedness of the world.

In his epistle to the churches at Ephesus, Magnesia, Trallis, and Rome, upon his martyrdom, he triumphantly says; — “ Now I begin to be “ a disciple; I weigh neither visible nor invisible “ things, so that I may gain Christ.”



JUSTIN MARTYR, a philosopher, who received Christianity five and twenty years after the death of Ignatius, declares, in the relation of his conversion to the Christian faith, — “ That the “ power of godliness in a plain simple Christian, “ had that influence and operation on his soul, “ that he could not but betake himself to a serious and strict life:”—and yet, before, he was a Cynic, a rigid sect: and it gave him joy at his martyrdom,

martyrdom, that he had spent his days as a ferious teacher, and a good example.

Eusebius relates of him——“ That though he
 “ was also a follower of Plato’s doctrine, yet,
 “ when he saw the Christians’ piety and courage,
 “ he concluded, that no people were so temperate,
 “ less voluptuous, and more set on divine things;”
 ——and this consideration first induced him to
 become a Christian.



EUGENIUS IV. Pope of Rome, was the son of Angelo Condelmerio, but his proper name was Gabriel. He ascended the Papal Throne from a low condition in life; and afterwards experienced, in the wars and tumults of his day, much of the vicissitudes of this world, and the insufficiency of power and splendour to confer true peace and enjoyment of mind.

The reflection he is said to have made on his death-bed, is remarkable. Being surrounded by a company of monks, with a voice interrupted by sighs, and his face turned towards them, he said: —— “ O Gabriel, how much better would it
 “ have been for thy soul’s health, hadst thou ne-
 “ ver

“ ver been raised to the Purple or Pontificate;
“ but continued a religious life in thy monastery.”



CHARLES V. Emperor of Germany, King of Spain, and Lord of the Netherlands, was born at Ghent in the year 1500.

He is said to have fought sixty battles, in most of which he was victorious; to have obtained six triumphs, conquered four kingdoms, and to have added eight principalities to his dominions. An almost unparalleled instance of worldly prosperity, and the greatness of human glory.

But all these fruits of his ambition, and all the honours that attended him, could not yield him true and solid satisfaction. Reflecting on the evils and miseries which he had occasioned, and convinced of the emptiness of earthly magnificence, he became disgusted with all the splendour that surrounded him, and thought it his duty to withdraw from it, and spend the rest of his days in religious retirement. Accordingly, he voluntarily resigned all his dominions to his brother and son; and after taking an affectionate and last farewell of his son, and a numerous re-

tinue

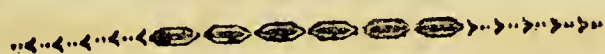
tinue of princes and nobility that respectfully attended him, he repaired to his chosen retreat; which was situated in a vale in Spain, of no great extent, watered by a small brook, and surrounded with rising grounds covered with lofty trees.

A deep sense of his frail condition and great imperfections, appears to have impressed his mind in this extraordinary resolution, and through the remainder of his life. As soon as he landed in Spain, he fell prostrate on the ground, and considering himself now as dead to the world, he kissed the earth, and said,—“ Naked came I out
“ of my mother’s womb, and naked I now return
“ to thee, thou common mother of mankind!”

In his humble retreat he occupied his time in religious exercises and innocent employments; and buried here, in solitude and silence, his grandeur, his ambition, together with all those vast projects, which, for near half a century, had alarmed and agitated Europe; filling every kingdom in it, by turns, with the terror of his arms, and the dread of being subjected to his power. Far from taking any part in the political transactions of the world, he restrained his curiosity even from any inquiry concerning them; and he seemed to view the busy scene which he had abandoned,

abandoned, with an elevation and indifference of mind, arising from his thorough experience of its vanity, as well as from the pleasing reflection of having disengaged himself from its cares and snares.

Here he enjoyed more complete contentment, than all his grandeur had ever yielded him ; as a full proof of which he has left this short, but comprehensive testimony, viz. ——— “ That he
“ had tasted more satisfaction in his solitude, in
“ one day, than in all the triumphs of his former
“ reign ; and that the sincere study, profession,
“ and practice of the Christian religion, had in
“ it such joys and sweetness as courts were
“ strangers to.”



JANE, QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

This excellent Queen was the daughter of Henry II. King of Navarre, and of Margaret of Orleans, sister to Francis I. of that name, King of France.

From her childhood she was carefully educated in the Protestant religion, to which she stedfastly adhered all her days. Bishop Burnet says of
her,

her,——“ That she both received the reformation, and brought her subjects to it. That she not only reformed her court, but her whole principality, to such a degree, that the Golden Age seemed to have returned under her; or rather, Christianity appeared again with the purity and lustre of its first beginnings.”

This illustrious queen being invited to attend the nuptials of her son and the King of France's sister, fell a sacrifice to the machinations and cruelty of the French court against the Protestant Religion.

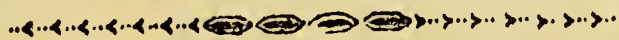
That religious fortitude and genuine piety, with which she was endued, did not, however, desert her in this great conflict, and at the approach of death.

To some that were about her, near the conclusion of her time, she said; —— “ I take all this as sent from the hand of God, my most merciful Father: nor have I, during this extremity, feared to die, much less murmured against God for inflicting this chastisement upon me; knowing that whatsoever he does with me, he so orders it, as that, in the end, it shall turn to my everlasting good.”

When

When she saw her ladies and women weeping about her bed, she blamed them, saying,—
“ Weep not for me, I pray you ; for God doth,
“ by this sickness, call me hence to enjoy a better
“ life ; and now I shall enter into the desired
“ haven, towards which this frail vessel of mine
“ hath been a long time steering.”

She expressed some concern for her children, as they would be deprived of her in their tender years ; but added, — “ I doubt not but God
“ himself will be their Father and Protector, as
“ he hath ever been mine in my greatest afflictions ; therefore I commit them wholly to his
“ government and fatherly care. I believe that
“ Christ is my only Mediator and Saviour, and I
“ look for salvation from no other. O my God !
“ in thy good time, deliver me from this body
“ and death, and from the troubles of this present life, that I may attain to the felicity which
“ thou hast promised to bestow upon me.”



CARDINAL WOLSEY, the favourite of Henry VIII. was the most absolute and wealthy minister of state this kingdom ever had ; and he
appeared

appeared in his time to govern Europe as well as England. He was the greatest instance which many ages had produced, of the variety and inconstancy of human things, both in his rise and fall. He held a great number of offices in the government, and his annual income was so extensive, that it exceeded the revenues of the crown.

But from this great height of power and splendour he was suddenly precipitated, being arrested for high treason, and deprived of all his employments : which sad reverse so affected his mind, that it soon produced a severe illness, which put a period to his days. A short season before he left the world, the review of his life, and a sense of the misapplication of his time and talents, drew from him this sorrowful declaration :——
“ Had I been as diligent to serve my God, as I
“ have been to please my king, he would not
“ have left me now in my gray hairs.”——An affecting admonition to those who have the power and means of doing more than ordinary good in the world, and do it not ; which seems to have been the melancholy case and reflection of this great man.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, a subject indeed of England, but who it is said was chosen King of Poland; whom Queen Elizabeth called her Philip; the Prince of Orange, his master; whose friendship the Lord Brooks was so proud of, that he would have it part of his epitaph,——“Here lies
“Sir Philip Sidney’s friend;”——whose death was lamented in verse by the then kings of France and Scotland, and the two universities of England: this great and accomplished person, on a just estimate of things, near the time of his death, perceived that at this solemn period, when the mind is looking round for support, all the honours and distinctions of the world are fruitless and unavailing. He repented so much of that witty vanity of his life, his Arcadia, that, to prevent the unlawful kindling of heats in others, he would have committed it to the flames himself.

The counsel of this experienced man, on taking his last leave of his friends, is worthy of remembrance:——“Love my memory; cherish my friends; their faith to me may assure you that they are honest; but above all, govern your wills and affections by the will and word of your Creator. In me behold the end
“ of

“of this world, and all its vanities.”——And indeed, he was not much mistaken in saying so, since in him was to be seen the imperfection of natural powers, polite learning, and worldly accomplishments. His farewell seems spoken without terror, with a clear sense, and sound judgment.



Sir FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, one of the most refined and penetrating statesmen that are known in history, flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and had a great share in promoting and accomplishing the extraordinary measures which distinguished that illustrious reign.

When he approached the evening of life, he became deeply impressed with a solemn sense of the superior importance of religion to all other considerations; and in a letter to his fellow-secretary Burleigh, Lord Treasurer of England, he addressed him in the following manner:——
 “We have lived enough to our country, our fortunes, our sovereign: it is high time we begin
 “to live to ourselves, and to our God.”——This giving occasion for some court-droll to visit and
 try

try to divert him,——“ Ah !” said he, “ while we
“ laugh, all things are serious round about us ;
“ God is serious who preserveth us, and hath
“ patience towards us ; Christ is serious who shed
“ his blood for us ; the Holy Ghost is serious
“ when he striveth with us ; the whole creation
“ is serious in serving God and us ; they are seri-
“ ous in hell and in heaven ; how then can we
“ be gay ?”



ANNA MARIA SCHURMAN was born at Cologne, in the year 1607. The powers of her understanding were very great, and she employed them in the acquisition of a large stock of literature. She was skilled in many languages ; and the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were so familiar to her, that she not only wrote, but spoke them fluently, to the surprise of the most learned men. She had also a competent knowledge of the liberal arts and sciences ; and was held in high reputation by several persons of the greatest learning of her day.

In the latter part of her time, she became more religiously disposed, and expressed a desire to lay
down

down all the glory she had acquired by means of these accomplishments, that so she might obtain the favour of God as her principal treasure and cause of rejoicing.

After this change she wrote an account of her life in Latin, which contains some remarkable circumstances concerning herself and some other religious persons with whom she was connected.

During her last illness, she declared her full satisfaction in the religious choice she had made. After suffering much from the disorder, she expressed herself in the following manner:—"I have proceeded one step further towards eternity and if the Lord shall please to increase my pains, it will be no cause of sorrow; the will of my God is all to me; I follow him. How good is it to be in the hands of God! But it will be still better for me, when I shall enjoy more full communion with him, among the children of God, in the abodes of the blessed. I have nothing more to desire in this world."

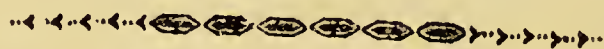
In the last night of her life, she said to one who watched with her,—"I hear a voice almost continually sounding in the ear of my mind, on this wise, a christian must suffer. This voice
(she

“ (she added) comforts me in pains, and supports
“ me that I faint not. O how good it is to re-
“ main in silence and patience before God ! My
“ most beneficent Father has not dealt with me
“ as with his servant Job ; whose friends were
“ with him seven days in silence, and then addres-
“ sed him with bitter words. But how sweet and
“ full of comfort are the words which are
“ spoken to me !”



A STRONG testimony to the superior excellen-
cy of religion, and to the vanity and unsatisfac-
toriness of worldly enjoyments, is given by Sir
JOHN MASON, who, though but 63 years old at
his death, yet had flourished in the reigns of four
princes, (Henry VIII. Edward VI. Queens Mary
and Elizabeth)—had been privy-counsellor to
them all, and an eye-witness of the various revolu-
tions and vicissitudes of those times. Towards his
latter end, being on his death-bed, he spoke
thus to those about him :——“ I have lived
“ to see five Princes, and have been privy-coun-
“ sellor to four of them. I have seen the most re-
“ markable things in foreign parts, and have been
“ present

“ present at most state transactions for thirty years
 “ together : and I have learned this after so
 “ many years experience ; that seriousness is the
 “ greatest wisdom, temperance the best physick,
 “ and a good conscience the best estate. And,
 “ were I to live again, I would change the court
 “ for a cloister, my privy-counsellor’s bustle for
 “ an hermit’s retirement, and the whole life I
 “ have lived in the palace for an hour’s enjoyment
 “ of God in the chapel. All things else forsake
 “ me, besides my God, my duty and my prayers.”



Sir WALTER RALEIGH is an eminent instance
 of true fortitude of mind, being as extraordinary
 a man as this country ever produced. He was
 well descended ; of health, strength, and a mas-
 culine beauty ; in understanding, he was quick ;
 in judgment sound ; learned, wise, and brave ;
 an historian, philosopher, a general, a statesman.
 After a long life, full of experience, he drops
 these excellent sayings a little before his death,
 to his son, to his wife, and to the world, viz. —
 “ Seek not riches basely, nor attain them by
 “ evil means, destroy no man for his wealth,
 “ nor

“ nor take any thing from the poor ; for the cry
“ thereof will pierce the heavens ; and it is most
“ detestable before God, and most dishonourable
“ before worthy men, to wrest any thing from
“ the needy and labouring soul ; God will never
“ prosper thee if thou offendest therein ; but use
“ thy poor neighbours and tenants well. Have
“ compassion on the poor and afflicted, and God
“ will bless thee for it : make not the hungry
“ soul sorrowful ; for if he curse thee in the bit-
“ terness of his soul, his prayer shall be heard
“ of him that made him.

“ Now, for the world dear child I know it too
“ well to persuade thee to dive into the practices
“ of it ; rather stand upon thy own guard
“ against all those that tempt thee to it, or may
“ practise upon thee, whether in thy conscience,
“ thy reputation or thy estate. Resolve that no
“ man is wise or safe, but he that is honest.
“ Serve God ; let him be the author of all thy
“ actions ; commend all thy endeavours to him,
“ that must either wither or prosper them :—
“ please him with prayer ; lest if he frown, he
“ confound all thy fortune and labour, like the
“ drops of rain upon the sandy ground. Let my
“ experienced advice and fatherly instructions

“ sink deep into thy heart ; so God direct thee
“ in all thy ways, and fill thy heart with his
“ grace.”

SIR WALTER RALEIGH'S LETTER TO
HIS WIFE AFTER HIS CONDEMNATION.

“ You shall receive, my dear wife, my last words, in these my last lines. My love I send you ; that you may keep when I am dead ; and my counsel, that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not, with my will, present you sorrows, dear wife ; let them go to the grave with me, and be buried in the dust ; and seeing that it is not the will of God that I shall see you any more, bear my destruction patiently, and with an heart like yourself. First, I send you all the thanks which my heart can conceive, or my words express, for your many travails and cares for me : for though they have not taken effect as you wished, yet my debt to you is not the less ; but pay it I never shall in this world. Secondly, I beseech you, for the love you bear me living, that you do not hide yourself many days ; but by your travails seek to help my miserable fortunes, and the right of your poor child ; your mourning cannot avail me who am but dust. Thirdly, you shall understand, that my lands were conveyed,

veyed, *bona fide*, to my child; the writings were drawn at Midsummer was a twelve month, as divers can witness; and I trust my blood will quench their malice who desired my slaughter, that they will not seek to kill you and yours with extreme poverty.

“ To what friend to direct you, I know not; for all mine have left me in the true time of trial: most sorry am I that being surpris'd by death, I can leave you no better estate; God hath prevented all my determinations; that great God, which worketh all in all. If you can live free from want, care for no more, for the rest is but vanity. Love God, and begin betimes; in him shall you find true and endless comfort; when you have travailed and wearied yourself with all sorts of worldly cogitations, you shall sit down by sorrow in the end. Teach your son also to fear and serve God, whilst he is young, that the fear of God may grow up in him; then will God be an husband to you, and a father to him: a husband and a father that can never be taken from you.

“ Dear wife, I beseech you, for my soul's sake pay all poor men. When I am dead, no doubt you will be much sought unto; for the world

thinks I was very rich ; have a care of the fair pretences of men ; for no greater misery can befall you in this life, than to become a prey unto the world, and after to be despised. As for me, I am no more yours, nor you mine ; death has cut us asunder, and God hath divided me from the world, and you from me. Remember your poor child, for his father's sake, who loved you in his happiest state. I sued for my life, but God knows, it was for you and yours, that I desired it : for know it, my dear wife, your child is the child of a true man, who in his own respect despiseth death, and his mis-shapen and ugly forms. I cannot write much ; God knows how hardly I steal this time, when all are asleep : and it is also time for me to separate my thoughts from the world. Beg my dead body, which living was denied you ; and either lay it in Sherborne, or in Exeter church, by my father and mother.

“ I can say no more : time and death call me away. The everlasting God, powerful, infinite, and inscrutable ; God Almighty, who is goodness itself, the true light and life, keep you and yours, and have mercy upon me, and forgive my persecutors and false accusers, and send us to meet in his glorious kingdom. My dear wife, farewell !
blefs

blefs my boy, pray for me, and let my true God hold you both in his arms.

“ Yours that was, but not now mine own,
WALTER RALEIGH.”



CATHARINE BRETTERG was born in Cheshire, about the year 1580, and was the daughter of John Bruen, Esq. of Bruen Stapleford. From a child, she was much employed in reading the Holy Scriptures, which she found of great use and comfort to her. She was moderate and sober in the enjoyment of the good things of this life; and carefully avoided the vain pleasures and fashions in which many greatly delight themselves. The society of religious people was very comfortable and pleasant to her; and it appears that, from her childhood to the end of her days, she was concerned to live in the fear of God, and to walk before him with a perfect heart.

This excellent woman, in the beginning of her last sickness, was permitted to labour under great exercise and conflict of spirit; but she was mercifully supported under this trial; and the victory was, in due time, graciously given her.

Her dependence on the Fountain of Wisdom and Strength, for relief from this trying state of mind, is evidenced by the following pious and fervent prayer :——“ O Lord God of my salvation, help my weakness; plead thou my cause, “ O God of Truth, for in thee do I trust. O “ blessed Saviour, perfect the work, I humbly “ beseech thee, which thou hast begun in me !”

At another time, after she had experienced deliverance from this conflict, she expressed herself in the following manner :——“ Oh, my God, “ blessed be Thy Name for evermore, who hast “ shewed me the path of life. Thou didst, O “ Lord, hide Thy face from me for a little season, but with everlasting mercy Thou hast had “ compassion on me. And now, blessed Lord, “ Thy comforting presence is come ; yea, Lord, “ Thou hast had respect to thy handmaid, and “ art come with fulness of joy and abundance “ of consolation.”

When she was near her end, her strength and voice being very feeble, she lifted up her eyes, and with a sweet countenance, and still voice, said,——“ My warfare is accomplished, and my “ iniquities are pardoned. Lord, whom have I in “ heaven but Thee? And I have none on earth “ besides

“besides thee. My flesh faileth, and my heart
“also ; but God is the strength of my heart, and
“my portion for ever. He that preserveth Ja-
“cob, and defendeth his Israel, he is my God,
“and will guide me unto death. Guide me, O
“Lord my God, and keep my soul in safety.”

Presently after these words, without any motion of body, she yielded up her soul in peace to her Creator.



LOUIS, Duke of Orleans, thus expressed the delight he found in piety and devotion :——“ I
“know by experience, that sublunary grandeur,
“and sublunary pleasure, are delusive and vain ;
“and are always infinitely below the conceptions
“we form of them : but, on the contrary, such
“happiness, and such complacency may be found
“in devotion and piety, as the sensual mind has
“no idea of.”

EXTRACT OF A LETTER, WRITTEN BY THE
EARL OF ESSEX, TO HIS PARTICULAR
FRIEND THE EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON,
SOME TIME BEFORE HIS DEATH.

“ WITH respect to your natural gifts, and abilities, remember, First, that you have nothing which you have not received. Secondly, that you possess them, not as a lord over them, but as one who must give an account for them. Thirdly, if you employ them to serve this world, or your own worldly delight, which the prince of this world will seek to entertain you with ; it is ingratitude, it is injustice, yea, it is perfidious treachery : for what would you think of such a servant of yours, who should convert your goods, committed to his charge, to the advantage or service of your greatest enemy ? and what do you less than this with God ; since you have all from him, and know that the world, and the prince thereof, are at continual enmity with him. Therefore, if ever the admonition of your truest friend shall be heard by you ; or if your country, which you may serve in so great and many things, be dear unto you ; if your God, whom you must (if you deal truly with yourself) acknowledge to be powerful over all, and just in all, be feared by
you ;

you; yea, if you be dear unto yourself, and prefer an everlasting happiness before a pleasant dream, out of which you must shortly awake, and then repent in the bitterness of your soul; if any of these things be regarded by you, then, I say, call yourself to account for what is past; cancel all the leagues you have made, without the warrant of a religious conscience; make a regular covenant with your God, to serve him with all your natural and spiritual, inward and outward gifts, and abilities; and then he, who is faithful and cannot lie, and hath promised to honour those who honour him, will give you that inward peace of soul, and true joy of heart, which till you have, you will never rest: and which, when you have, you shall never be shaken; and which you can never attain to any other way.

“ESSEN”



HENRY, Prince of Wales, eldest son to King James the First, of whom many excellent things are recorded, had, notwithstanding, when he drew near his conclusion, to lament the misimprovement of his time. A person whom he

loved, and who had been the companion of his diversions being with him in his sickness, and asking him,—“How he did,”—was, amongst many other sober expressions, answered thus:—
 “Ah, Tom! I in vain wish for that time I lost
 “with thee and others, in vain recreations.”—
 So vain were recreations, and so precious was time to a prince, and no ordinary one neither, upon a dying bed.

But why wished he, with others, for more time, but that it might be better employed? Thus hath the holy Spirit of God, in men, throughout all generations, convinced them of their vanity and folly upon their dying-beds, who, before, were too much occupied with temporal pursuits, to mind the great concerns of eternity. But when their days were almost numbered; when mortality hastened on them; when the revelation of the righteous judgment was at the door, and all their worldly recreations and enjoyments must be parted with; O then! the holy witness had room to plead with conscience: then nothing but a pure, strict, and religious life, was valuable; then all the world for a little time, though before they had given all their time for a little of a vain world.

But

But if so short a representation of the inconsistency of the vanities of the world, with the Christian life, could make so deep an impression, as it has upon numbers, at that awakening period; to what a noble stature had they been grown, in pious and heavenly knowledge; and how much greater had their rewards been, if they had seasonably relinquished those perishing entertainments of the world, and given their minds to the tuition and guidance of that grace of God, which had so long shined in darkness, uncomprehended of it, and which was at last but just perceived to give a sight of what they had been doing all their days!

What a source of consolation, in the evening of life, to know that we have timely laboured to improve our talents, and to have our lamps burning! But how unspeakably distressing, at that season, to look back on repeated convictions of mind, and numerous admonitions, disregarded; and to reflect, that —— “the summer is ended, the harvest is over, and we are not gathered!”



JOHN, Lord HARRINGTON, was the eldest son of that Lord Harrington, to whom King
James

James the First committed the education of his eldest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth.

He had excellent natural endowments, and had acquired a considerable stock of useful learning; but was mostly eminent for his knowledge in the work of his salvation.

He manifested a principle of true life in his heart, by his love to all who were truly religious. And so great was his compassion for his fellow-creatures in necessity, that he gave the tenth part of his yearly income to charitable uses.

At the beginning of his last sickness, he strongly apprehended that death would be the end of it, and accordingly prepared for the grave.

He declared his faith in, and undoubted hope of, salvation by Christ; and said, with much cheerfulness, that——“he feared not death in
“what shape soever it might assail him.”——In the midst of many heavenly things, which dropped from time to time from his mouth, he desired to be dissolved, and to be at home with the Lord; declaring, not above two hours before his death, that——“he still felt the comfort and
“joys of assured salvation, by Christ Jesus.”——

And

And when the hour of his departure was come, he said,——“ O, that joy ! O, my God ! when
“ shall I be with thee ?—— And with the like words, expressive of a tender heavenly frame of mind, he peacefully expired.



Sir HENRY WOTTON, an Englishman, eminent for learning and his knowledge in state affairs, was born in the year 1568. He was many times employed as ambassador to several of the European states, and discharged the trust reposed in him, with ability, and to the satisfaction of the King. He enjoyed the favour of James, and was much esteemed and admired by his contemporaries. Notwithstanding these honours, he declared that——“ it was the greatest happiness of his life, to be at leisure to be and to do
“ good.”——Though he was esteemed for sobriety and wisdom, yet towards the end of his days, when he reflected on his past time, he was accustomed to repeat this interesting declaration :——“ How much time have I to repent of,
“ and how little to do it in !”

Sir

Sir CHRISTOPHER HATTON, a little before his death, advised his relations to be serious in the search after——“the will of God in the
“holy word: For,” said he, “it is deservedly
“accounted a piece of excellent knowledge to
“understand the law of the land, and the customs of a man’s country: how much more so
“to know the statutes of heaven, and the laws
“of eternity, those immutable and eternal laws
“of justice and righteousness;—to know the will
“and pleasure of the great Monarch and universal King of the world:—I have seen an end of
“all perfection, but thy commandments, O God!
“are exceeding broad.”

Whatever other knowledge a man may be endowed with, could he, by a vast and penetrating mind, comprehend all the knowledge of art and nature; could he acquire all languages, and sound the depth of all arts and sciences; could he describe the interest of all states, the intrigues of all courts, the reason of all civil laws and constitutions, and give an account of all histories; and yet not know the Author of his being, and the Preserver of his life, his sovereign, and his judge; his best friend, and surest refuge in trouble; the support of his life, and the hope of
his

his death ; his future happiness, and his portion for ever ; he doth but, with a great deal of knowledge, go down to destruction.



Sir THOMAS SMITH, Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth, a quarter of a year before his death, sent to his friends, the Bishops of Winchester and Worcester, and entreated them to draw him, out of the word of God, the plainest and exactest way of making his peace with him ; adding, that—" it was lamentable, men considered not for what end they were born into " the world, until they were ready to go out " of it."

It is truly a sorrowful reflection, that the pursuits of this life, and the love of the world, are often so much indulged, as to captivate the mind, and charm it into a state of insensibility to the great end of its existence. How much wiser and happier should we be, if we engaged in temporal concerns with moderation and restraint, the true way to extract all their good, and considered ourselves as strangers and pilgrims travelling towards a better country ; instead of being occupied, under continual anxiety and frequent disappointments, in the delusive chace of interest
and

and pleasure, until the scene is nearly closed, and the mind left to the anguish of a melancholy retrospect!

The flood of time is fast approaching, and will soon pass over us, and bury, in silence and oblivion, all our busy, fascinating schemes and engagements; and leave nothing to survive the wreck, but virtue and goodness, and the consciousness of divine favour. What urgent motives for correcting our terrestrial aims and labours, and for striving to become heirs of that kingdom, whose honours and enjoyments are perfect, and will last for ever!



Doctor DONNE, was a person of great parts and learning, and in particular favour with King James the First, as well as much respected and visited by the great men of his day. When the time of his departure from this world drew near, being upon his death bed, and taking a solemn farewell of his friends, he made this weighty declaration to them:—"I repent of all my life, but that part of it which I spent in communion with God, and in doing good."

PHILIP III. King of Spain, when he drew near the end of his days, seriously reflecting on his past life, and greatly affected with the remembrance of his mis-spent time, expressed his deep regret in these terms:——“ Ah ! how happy
“ would it have been for me, had I spent these
“ twenty-three years, that I have held my king-
“ dom, in a retirement !”

The following declaration, made to his confessor, shews that, at this period, he perceived the divine protection and favour to be the only source of consolation and support :——“ My
“ concern is for my soul, not for my body. I
“ lay all that God has given me, my dominion,
“ power, and my life, at the feet of Jesus Christ
“ my Saviour.”



GONDAMOR, Philip the Third's Ambassador in England, and held the ablest man of his time, was a person who took great freedom as to religion in his politics, and scrupled not to serve his ends by any means that would conveniently accomplish them.

Towards his latter end, he grew very thoughtful of his former conduct ; and after all his negotiations.

negociations and successes in business, he became so humbled, under a sense of his weakness and errors, that he said to one of his friends ;——
 “ I fear nothing in the world more than sin.”——
 And he often declared, that——“ he had rather
 “ endure hell than sin.”——So clear and strong
 were his convictions, and so exceeding sinful did
 sin appear to him, upon a serious consideration
 of his ways.



CARDINAL RICHLIEU was a native of France, and born in the year 1585. He was a great favourite of the King, and was advanced by him to be his first Minister of State. Being a man of prodigious capacity, and of a restless and insatiable ambition, he formed to himself vast designs; and this rendered his life a series of agitations and inquietudes. But after he had given law to all Europe for many years, and had arrived at the cool and retrospective period, he confessed to old Peter de Moulin, the famous French Protestant, that——“ being forced upon many irregularities,
 “ by that which they call reason of state, he
 “ could not tell how to satisfy his conscience for
 “ several things ; and therefore had many tempt-
 “ ations to doubt and disbelieve a God, another
 “ world,

“ world, and the immortality of the soul, there-
“ by to relieve his mind from any disquiet,
“ but in vain : so strong,” he said, “ was the
“ notion of God on his soul, so clear the im-
“ pression of him upon the frame of the world,
“ so unanimous the consent of mankind, so
“ powerful the convictions of his own conscience,
“ that he could not but taste the power of the
“ world to come—and so live, as one that must
“ die ; and so die, as one that must live for
“ ever.”

The solemn state of his mind being observed
by one who came to see him, he was asked, why
he was so sad ? to which he replied ;——“ The
“ soul is a serious thing ; it must be either sad
“ here, for a moment, or be sad for ever.”



CARDINAL MAZARINE, first Minister of
State in France, was conspicuous for the great-
ness of his abilities, and his knowledge of the
world. He was reputed to be the most profound
statesman of his time, and gave great proofs of
it in the successes of the French crown, under
his ministry.

His

His aim was the grandeur of the world, to which he made all other considerations submit : but, poor man ! he was of another mind, a short time before his death ; for being awakened by the smart lashes of conscience, which represented his soul's condition to be very dismal, with astonishment and tears he cried out,——“ O my
“ poor soul ! what will become of thee ? Whi-
“ ther wilt thou go ?”

To the Queen Mother of France, who came to visit him, and who had been his friend at court, he expressed himself in these terms ;——
“ Madam, your favours have undone me : were
“ I to live again, I would be a capuchin, rather
“ than a courtier.”



OXENSTIERN, Chancellor of Sweden, was a person of the first quality, station, and ability in his own country ; and his share and success, not only in the chief ministry of affairs in that kingdom, but in the greatest negotiations of Europe, during his time, made him no less considerable abroad.

Being visited in his retreat from publick business, by Commissioner Whitlock, Ambassador from

from England to Queen Christiana, in the conclusion of their discourse he said to the Ambassador ;——“ I have seen much, and enjoyed much
“ of this world, but I never knew how to live
“ till now. I thank my good God, who has
“ given me time to know him, and to know
“ myself. All the comfort I have, and which is
“ more than the whole world can give, is—feel-
“ ing the good Spirit of God in my heart, and
“ reading in this good book, (holding up the
“ Bible) that came from it.”

This enlightened and experienced man further addressed the Ambassador as follows :——

“ You are now in the prime of your age and
“ vigour, and in great favour and business ; but
“ all this will leave you, and you will one day
“ better understand and relish what I say to you ;
“ and then you will find, that there is more wis-
“ dom, truth, comfort, and pleasure, in retiring
“ and turning our heart from the world, to the
“ good Spirit of God, and in reading the Bible,
“ than in all the courts and favours of princes.”

——“ This I had, (says Wm. Penn) as near as I
am able to remember, from the Ambassador’s
own mouth, more than once. A very remark-
able and edifying account, when we consider
from

from whom it came; one of the greatest and wisest men of his age, while his understanding was as sound and vigorous, as his experience and knowledge were great."



JOHN SELDEN, a native of Suffex, and born in the year 1584, was one of the greatest scholars and antiquaries of his time, insomuch, that he was styled—"The great Dictator of Learning to the English Nation."—He laboriously employed himself in taking an extensive survey of the knowledge and learning which had been possessed by the Jews, Heathens, and Christians.

This celebrated man, towards the end of his days, in a conference with Bishop Usher, declared, that—"notwithstanding he had been so laborious in his inquiries, and curious in his collections, and had possessed himself of a treasure of books and manuscripts upon all ancient subjects; yet he could rest his soul on none, save the scriptures:"—and that above all, that passage lay most remarkably upon his spirit, *Titus* ii. 11, 12, &c.—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men;

“ men ; teaching us, that denying ungodliness
“ and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,
“ righteously, and godly, in this present world ;
“ looking for that blessed hope and glorious ap-
“ pearing of the great God, and our Saviour
“ Jesus Christ ; who gave himself for us, that he
“ might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify
“ unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of
“ good works.”——And, indeed, it is one of
the most comprehensive passages in the Scrip-
tures ; for it comprises the end, means, and re-
compence of Christianity.



HUGO GROTIUS, a native of Holland, was born in the year 1583. He is said to have been the brightest genius ever recorded of a youth, in the learned world. Nature bestowed on him a great comprehension, a solid judgment, and a wonderful memory ; and these extraordinary natural endowments, had all the advantages that education could confer upon them. In short, he was a person of very eminent talents, and he is highly celebrated for his extensive learning, and universal knowledge :——“ He was a light,”——say the Statesmen ; “ A light,” say the Churchmen

men too; witness his annals, and his work, “*De Jure Belli et Pacis* ;” his “*Truth of the Christian Religion*,” and elaborate “*Commentaries on the Scriptures*.”

After all his attainments, reputation, and labours, he winds up his life and choice in this memorable declaration :—“ I would give all my “ learning and honour, for the plain integrity of “ John Urick, who was a religious poor man, “ that spent eight hours of his time in prayer, “ eight in labour, and but eight in meals, sleep, “ and other necessaries.”

To one that admired his great industry, he returned an answer, to this effect :—“ Ah ! I “ have consumed much of my life, in labori- “ ously doing nothing.”—And to another, that inquired of his wisdom and learning, what course to take, he solemnly answered,—“ Be serious.”

In his last sickness, which was of short duration, he appears to have been tranquil, and resigned to the will of God. He expressed his faith in Jesus Christ, and declared, that his hope rested upon him. To one that mentioned to him the Publican spoken of in the Gospel, he
humbly

humbly replied,—“ I am that Publican ;”—and soon after expired.

Without a particular allusion to the case of this great man, we may remark, that when great talents and learning are, from pure motives, and in true humility, consecrated to the service of truth and religion, they become acceptable offerings in the divine sight, and often eminently promote the good of mankind. But when we misapply these qualifications, make them subservient to pride and vanity, or attribute to them an efficacy, in producing virtue and happiness, that does not belong to their nature ; they occasion us to consume our time in earnestly doing nothing, or that which is worse than nothing ; and they lay the foundation for bitter regret in the winding up of life.

The worth and importance of those advantages are lamentably over-rated, if our estimation of them is so high, and pursuit so earnest, as to dispose us to undervalue, to postpone, or disregard, that most interesting injunction of our Lord ;—
“ Seek ye first (early, and in preference to all
“ other things) the kingdom of God, and his
“ righteousness :”—remembering that this is—
“ the one thing needful.”

Whilst the mind is occupied with the variety and intricacy of speculation and literary engagements, and the heart elated with the flattering distinctions which they produce, we may not be sufficiently aware of the tendency to that fatal effect: but when the close of our day approaches, and the retrospect of life is made; when the ardour of pursuit has abated, and the delusions of vanity and passion are at an end; we shall form a true estimate of the worth of all sublunary attainments and possessions. We shall then, if not before, perceive that, to have our conversation in the world, with simplicity and godly sincerity; to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child; and to secure an incorruptible and immortal inheritance; are things of infinitely greater moment, than merely to possess all the accomplishments of mind and body that this world can bestow.

As it is, therefore, our highest wisdom, may it also be our greatest concern, seasonably to anticipate these reflections; and so to temper and regulate all our studies, and all the engagements of this life, that they may coincide with, and promote the great end of our being!

SALMASIUS,

SALMASIUS, a man of very uncommon abilities, and extensive erudition, was descended of an ancient and honourable family in France. He wrote many volumes of literature, and acquired a celebrated name in the republick of letters. In short, he was esteemed to be the most consummate scholar of his time.

When he arrived at the evening of life, and had to reflect on the work of his day, he acknowledged, that he had mistaken true learning, and that in which solid happiness consisted, and exclaimed thus against himself :——“ Oh ! I
“ have lost a world of time ; time that most pre-
“ cious thing in the world ! whereof, had I but
“ one year more, it should be spent in David’s
“ Psalms, and Paul’s Epistles. Oh Sirs,” said he to those about him, “ mind the world less,
“ and God more : The fear of the Lord, that is
“ wisdom ; and to depart from evil, that is un-
“ derstanding.”



A. RIVETUS was a man of great understanding, and much revered in the Dutch nation. After a long life of study, in search of divine

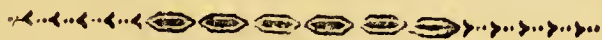
knowledge, being on his death-bed, and conversing upon heavenly things, he brake forth in this manner :——“ God has taught me more of
 “ himself in ten days sickness, than I could obtain by all my labour and studies. He has
 “ made me to go home into myself, where I was
 “ not before ; for I was in the world. But I
 “ am now in the school of the Lord.”——Plain and simple are the means to the knowledge of God and his holy will, when we come to be in earnest, and our hearts are sincerely concerned to know and obey it :——“ The way-faring man,
 “ though a fool, (in the world’s wisdom) shall
 “ not err therein.”



FRANCIS JUNIUS, an ingenious person, who hath written his own life, as he was reading Tully de Legibus, fell into a persuasion, *Nihil curare Deum, nec sui, nec alieni* ; till in a tumult at Lyons, the Lord wonderfully delivered him from imminent death ; so that he was forced to acknowledge a divine Providence therein.

When his father heard of the dangerous ways that his son was led into, he sent for him home, where

where he carefully and piously instructed him, and caused him to read over the New Testament; of which himself writes thus:—"When I
" opened the New Testament, I first lighted
" upon John's first chapter—*In the beginning*
" *was the word, &c.*—I read part of the chap-
" ter, and was suddenly convinced, that the di-
" vinity of the argument, and the majesty and
" authority of the writing, did very much excel
" all the eloquence of human writings; my body
" trembled, my mind was astonished, and was
" so affected all that day, that I knew not where
" and what I was. Thou wast mindful of me,
" O my God! according to the multitude of thy
" mercies, and didst call home thy lost sheep
" into the fold."—And, as Justin Martyr for-
merly, so he now declared, that—"the power
" of godliness, in a plain, simple Christian,
" wrought so upon him, that he could not but
" take up a strict and a serious life."



WILLIAM COWPER, Bishop of Galoway,
when near the end of his days, thus expressed his
religious faith and hope, to his weeping friends

around him:—"Death is somewhat dreary;
 "and the streams of that Jordan, between us and
 "our Canaan, run with great force; but they
 "stand still when the ark comes."

When the concluding scene of life is approaching, under the trials and distresses peculiar to that affecting period, the most powerful, and indeed the only true support and consolation, will be found in the sense of divine favour, and in a steady faith, that all our sorrows will terminate with time, and our spirits be admitted into that kingdom, where we shall live and rejoice for ever.



Sir HENRY VANE was born about the year 1612, and was possessed of abilities of the first rate, and an extensive knowledge of mankind.

In his youth he was too much addicted to company, and cared little for serious things; but on reading a book called—"The Signs of a Godly Man,"—and being convicted in himself that they were just, but that he had no share in any one of them, he fell into such extreme anguish and horror, that for some days and nights, he took
 little

little food or rest. This at once dissolved his old friendships, and made those religious impressions and resolutions, which neither university, courts, princes, nor parents, nor any losses nor disappointments that threatened his new course of life, could weaken or alter. And though this laid him under some disadvantages for a time, yet his great integrity and abilities broke through that obscurity; so that those of very different sentiments did not only admire him, but very often desired him to accept the most eminent negotiations of his country; which he served, according to his own principles, with great success, and a remarkable self-denial.

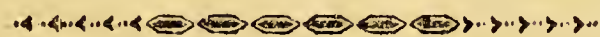
This great man's maxim was,—“ Religion
“ is the best master, and the best friend; for it
“ makes men wise, and will never leave them,
“ that never leave it;”—which he found true
in himself; for it made him wiser than those that
had been his teachers, and gave him a support
and hope that could not be shaken. This was
the judgment, as well of foreigners, as of others,
who had the curiosity to see him die: at which
awful season, he verified some former meditations
of his own, viz :—“ The day of death is the
“ judge of all our other days; the very trial and

“ touchstone of the actions of our lives. It is
 “ the end that crowns the work; and a good
 “ death honoureth a man’s whole life. The
 “ fading corruption and loss of this life, is the
 “ passage into a better. Death is no less essential
 “ to us, than to live, or to be born. In flying
 “ death, thou fliest thyself; thy essence is equally
 “ parted into these two,—life and death. It is
 “ no small reproach to a Christian, whose faith
 “ is in immortality, and the blessedness of ano-
 “ ther life, to fear death much, which is the
 “ necessary passage thereunto.”



ADMIRAL PENN, after thirty years employ-
 ment in several places of eminent trust and ho-
 nour, upon serious reflection, not long before his
 death, spoke to one of his sons in this manner ;
 —“ Son William, I am weary of the world ;
 “ I would not live over my days again, if I
 “ could command them with a wish ; for the
 “ snares of life are greater than the fears of
 “ death. This troubles me, that I have offended
 “ a gracious God, who has followed me to this
 “ day. O, have a care of sin ! That is the sting
 “ both

“ both of life and death. Three things I com-
“ mend to you : First, let nothing in this world
“ tempt you to wrong your conscience ; I charge
“ you, do nothing against your conscience : so
“ will you keep peace at home, which will be a
“ feast to you in the day of trouble. Secondly,
“ whatever you design to do, lay it justly, and
“ time it seasonably ; for that gives security and
“ dispatch. Lastly, be not troubled at disap-
“ pointments ; for if they may be recovered, do
“ it ; if they cannot, trouble is vain. If you
“ could not have helped it, be content ; there
“ is often peace and profit in submitting to Pro-
“ vidence ; for afflictions make wise. If you
“ could have helped it, let not your trouble ex-
“ ceed instruction for another time. These
“ rules will carry you with firmness and com-
“ fort through this inconstant world.”



A noble young man of the family of HOWARD,
who had in health too much yielded to the tempt-
ations of youth, when laid upon a sick bed,
which proved his dying bed, fell under the pow-
er and agony of strong convictions. In the re-

membrance of his former extravagances, he deeply bewailed his condition, and cried earnestly to God to forgive him, abhorring his sinful course of life, and promising amendment if it should please him to restore his health. But having, after great conflict of mind, tasted of the love and forgiveness of God, he became willing to die; and warned his acquaintance and kindred who came to see him,——“to fear God, and to “forfake the pleasures and vanity of this world:”——And thus, in hope of the divine mercy and favour in a better life, he yielded up his soul to HIM that gave it, and was delivered from the troubles of time, and the frailties of mortality.



PRINCESS ELIZABETH of the Rhine, claims a memorial in this collection; her virtue giving greater lustre to her name, than her quality, which yet was of the greatest in the German empire. She had a small territory, which she governed so well, that she shewed herself fit for a greater. She constantly, every last day in the week, sat in judgment, and heard and determined causes herself; on which occasion, her patience, justice,

justice, and mercy, were admirable: and she frequently remitted her forfeitures, where the party was poor, or in any respect meritorious. And, which was excellent, though unusual, she often tempered her discourses with religion, and charitably drew the concerned parties to submission and agreement; exercising, not so much the rigour of her power, as the power of her persuasion.

“ Her meekness and humility (says W. Penn) appeared to me extraordinary; she did not consider the quality, but the merit, of the people she entertained. Did she hear of a retired man, hid from the world, and seeking after the knowledge of a better, she was sure to set him down in the catalogue of her charity, if he wanted it. I have casually seen, I believe, fifty tokens sealed and superscribed to the several poor subjects of her bounty, whose distances would not suffer them to know one another, though they knew her, whom yet some of them had never seen. Thus, though she kept no sumptuous table in her own court, she spread the tables of the poor in their solitary cells; breaking bread to virtuous pilgrims, according to their want, and her ability.

“ She was abstemious in her living, and in apparel, void of all vain ornaments. I must needs say,

say, that her mind had a noble prospect: her eye was to a better and more lasting inheritance, than can be found below; which made her not over-rate the honours of her station, or the learning of the schools, of which she was an extraordinary judge. Being once at Hamburgh, a religious person, whom she went to see for religion's sake, telling her,—"It was too great an honour for him, that he should have a visitant of her quality come under his roof, that was allied to so many great kings and princes of this world;"—she humbly answered,—“If they were godly, as well as great, it would be an honour indeed; but if you knew what that greatness was, as well as I, you would value less that honour.”

“Being in some agony of spirit, after a religious meeting we had in her chamber, she said,—“It is a hard thing to be faithful to what one knows: O, the way is strait! I am afraid I am not weighty enough in my spirit to walk in it.”

“She once withdrew, on purpose to give her servants the liberty of discoursing with us, that they might the more freely put what questions of conscience they desired to be satisfied in, for they were religious: and at times she suffered

suffered both them and the poorest of her town, to sit by her in her own bed-chamber, where we had two meetings. I cannot forget her last words, when I took my leave of her :——“ Let
“ me desire you to remember me, though I live
“ at this distance, and that you should never see
“ me more. I thank you for this good time ;
“ and know and be assured, though my condition
“ subjects me to divers temptations, yet my soul
“ hath strong desires after the best things.”

“ She lived a single life till about sixty years of age, and then departed at her own house in Herwerden, in the year 1680, as much lamented, as she had lived beloved, by the people : to whose real worth I do, with a religious gratitude for her kind reception, dedicate this memorial.

“ W. PENN.”



DU RENTI was a young nobleman of France, who was not more distinguished by his high birth, than by excellent talents and qualifications of mind. This accomplished youth, touched with a sense of the vanity of worldly grandeur, and the sweetness of a retired and religious life, thought

thought it his duty, notwithstanding the honours and employments that waited for him, to withdraw from those scenes, which he feared would ensnare and corrupt his heart, in order that he might enjoy a life of more communion with God.

The following sentiments shew him to have been a man whose mind was much redeemed from the spirit and enjoyments of this world; and who laboured, above all things, for a heavenly frame and temper, and a holy, acceptable walking in the Divine Sight.

“ Since the time that I gave up my liberty to
“ God, I perceived to what a state of deep hu-
“ miliation the soul must be brought, to render
“ it capable of union with him. I beheld my-
“ self as if encompassed with whatever the world
“ loves and possesses; and, as it were, a hand
“ removing all this far from me. The splendour
“ and vain enjoyments of this transitory scene,
“ are great incumbrances to my soul in her en-
“ deavours to obtain the favour of God; of
“ which, therefore, his pleasure is that she be
“ stripped, in order to arrive at that state of
“ humility and poorness of spirit, which will
“ bring her into possession of real honour and
“ solid riches.

“ I

“ I find no security in any state, but in this
“ of dying to the world, and in true self-abase-
“ ment : this is to be baptized into Christ’s death,
“ and to live the life of Christian self-denial.
“ All that can be imagined to befall us in this
“ lower world, is of small concernment, though
“ it were the losing of all our possessions. Had
“ we but a little faith, and a little love, how
“ happy should we find ourselves in being wil-
“ ling to resign up every thing ; and in saying,
“ —*My God, and my All !*”

How conformable are these sentiments to the
divine injunction,——“ Love not the world,
“ nor the things that are in the world”——“ But
“ be ye transformed by the renewing of your
“ mind.”——It is, indeed, a holy and happy
state, to be living above the world, and pressing
after perfection, at the same time that we grate-
fully acknowledge Divine Goodness, in providing
for our necessities during our passage through life.

This supreme love of God, and desire to be
united to him, though it is often cherished by
retirement, is not a solitary and inactive princi-
ple : It will not only purify and exalt the mind ;
it will also expand it towards its fellow-creatures,
and lead it forth into acts of charity and bene-
ficence to all men.

A LETTER FROM JAMES, EARL OF MARLBOROUGH, A LITTLE BEFORE HIS DEATH, IN THE BATTLE AT SEA, ON THE COAST OF HOLLAND, &c.

“ I believe the goodness of your nature, and the friendship you have always borne me, will receive with kindness the last office of your friend. I am in health enough of body, and, through the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, well disposed in mind. This I premise, that you may be satisfied that what I write proceeds not from any fantastic terror of mind, but from a sober resolution of what concerns myself, and an earnest desire to do you more good after my death, than my example, (God of his mercy pardon the badness of it!) in my life-time, may do you harm.

“ I will not speak aught of the vanity of this world: your own age and experience will save that labour. But there is a certain thing that goes up and down the world, called Religion, dressed, and pretended fantastically, and to purposes bad enough, which yet, by such evil dealing, loseth not its being. The great good God hath not left it without a witness, more or less, sooner or later, in every man's bosom, to direct us in the pursuit of it, and for the avoiding of those
inextricable

inextricable disquisitions and entanglements, with which our own frail reason would perplex us. God, in his infinite mercy, hath given us his holy word, in which, as there are many things hard to be understood, so there is enough plain and easy, to quiet our minds, and to direct us concerning our future being. I confess to God and you, I have been a great neglecter, and, I fear, despiser of it; God, of his infinite mercy pardon me the dreadful fault! But, when I retired myself from the noise and deceitful vanity of the world, I found no true comfort in any other resolution than what I had from thence. I commend, from the bottom of my heart, the same to your, I hope, happy use.

“ Dear Hugh, let us be more generous, than to believe we die as the beasts that perish; but with a Christian, manly, brave resolution, look to what is eternal. The only great and holy God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, direct you to a happy end of your life, and send us a joyful resurrection. So prays your true friend,

“ MARLBOROUGH.”

When our taste for compositions of any sort, or our pursuits in life, are such as occasion us to
contemn

contemn or neglect the Holy Scriptures, and the simplicity of the Gospel, it is a sad proof that the mind has begun to be perverted, and that the way is prepared for great depravity of heart. Whatever, therefore, tends to lessen our esteem for, and perusal of, those venerable and highly interesting communications of the Divine Will, should be regarded with early apprehension, and avoided with the utmost solicitude.



BULSTRODE WHITLOCK was a man in high office, and of very great abilities; a scholar, a lawyer, a statesman; in short, he was one of the most accomplished men of the age.*

In his retirement from the world, being visited by a friend, he, among other serious observations, expressed himself in the following manner:—

“ I have ever thought there has been but one
 “ true religion in the world, and that is the work
 “ of the Spirit of God in the hearts and souls
 “ of men. There have been, indeed, divers
 “ forms and shapes of things, through the many
 “ dispensations

* See a further account of him, page 36.

“ dispensations of God to men, answerable to
“ his own wise ends, in reference to the low
“ and uncertain state of man in the world. The
“ old world had the Spirit of God, and the new
“ world has the same Spirit, both Jew and Gen-
“ tile, and it strives with all: and they who
“ have been led by it, have been the good people
“ in every dispensation of God to the world.
“ And I myself must say, that I have felt it from
“ a child to convince me of my evil and vanity;
“ and it has often given me a true measure of
“ this poor world, and some taste of divine
“ things; and it is my grief that I did not more
“ early apply my soul to it: for I can say that,
“ since my retirement from the greatness and
“ hurries of the world, I have felt something of
“ the work and comfort of it, and that it is both
“ ready and able to instruct, and lead, and pre-
“ serve those who will humbly and sincerely
“ hearken to it. So that my religion is, the
“ good Spirit of God in my heart; I mean, what
“ that has wrought in me and for me.”

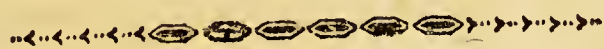
ANTHONY

ANTHONY LOWTHER, of Mask, was a person of an excellent understanding, and of great sweetness of disposition; to which was added the advantage of a sober and guarded education. Notwithstanding these privileges, when he came of age to be under his own government he was seduced by the men of pleasure of the town, into its customary liberties and dissipations; and he appears to have been as much a judge as any one, of the satisfaction which that way of life could yield. But some time before his last sickness, with a clear and awakened judgment, he frequently condemned his own mis-conduct, and lamented the unchristian indulgencies which so much abounded in the world. These sentiments were strengthened by the instruction of a long and severe illness; which caused him earnestly to aspire after the knowledge of the best things, and to seek the best company; and disposed him to lose as little time as possible, that he might redeem the time he had lost.

He often, with a lively relish, bore testimony to the truth and excellence of religion, from the sense which he had of it in his own breast: frequently declaring,——“He knew no joy comparable to that of being assured of the love
“and

“and mercy of God.”——And as he often implored divine favour, with strong convictions, and deep humility and reverence, so he frequently experienced the comfort of it before the period of his days. It was usual with him to press his relations and friends, in a most serious and affectionate manner,——“to love God, and
“one another, more, and this poor world less.”
——And this he had so much at heart, that it was almost always the conclusion of his religious discourses with his family.

He sometimes said, that——“though he could
“have been willing to have lived, if God had
“pleased, to see his younger children nearer a
“settlement in life; yet he felt no desire to live
“longer in the world, but on the terms of living
“better in it: for he did not only think virtue
“the safest, but the happiest way of living:”——
And he recommended and enjoined the love and practice of it to his children, upon his last blessing.



JANE RATCLIFFE (who was born in the year 1638) deserves a place in these memoirs, being a religious and exemplary woman, and one who
appears

appears to have been favoured with great strength and steadiness of hope and faith, that, through divine mercy, all things would work together for her preservation, and final well-being.

In early life, she indulged herself in many of the follies and vanities of her time; but from these insnaring allurements she came to be redeemed, and to have her desires and affections set upon solid and permanent enjoyments. We shall pass over the intermediate parts of her circum-spect life, and come to the closing scene of it; at which time, or when in prospect of it, she appeared to be much raised above the love of life, and the fears of death. The following is an extract from her own expressions, on that solemn occasion. At the same time that they manifest her willingness and desires to be released from the sorrows and dangers of mortality, there can be no doubt but they were limited by an humble submission, and pious resignation, to the will of the gracious and wise Disposer of all events.

“ I desire to die”—said she, “ because I want,
“ while I live here, the glorious presence of God,
“ which I love and long for; and that sweet
“ fellowship of angels and saints, who would be
“ as glad to see me with them, as I should be to
“ see

“ see them about me; and would entertain me
“ with unwearied delight.

“ I desire to die—because, while I live, I shall
“ want the perfection of my nature, and be as an
“ estranged and banished child from my father’s
“ house.

“ I desire to die—because I would not live to
“ offend so good a God, and grieve his Holy
“ Spirit. For his loving-kindness is better than
“ life, and he is abundant in mercy to me; and
“ it often lies as a heavy load upon my heart, to
“ think of displeasing him.

“ I desire to die---because this world is gene-
“ rally infected with the plague of sin; and I
“ myself am tainted with the same disease: so
“ that, while I live here, I shall be in danger of
“ being infected, or of infecting others. And if
“ this world hates me, because I endeavour to
“ follow goodness, how would it rejoice, if my
“ foot should slip? How woful would my life be
“ to me, if I should give occasion to the world to
“ triumph and blaspheme? There are in my na-
“ ture so many defects, insufficiencies, mis-
“ takings, and transgressions, that I may say
“ with David, innumerable evils have compassed
“ me about; my iniquities have taken hold on
“ me,

“ me, so that I am not able to look up. I there-
“ fore desire heaven for holiness, and to the end
“ I may sin no more.

“ I desire to die—because nothing in this
“ world can give me solid and durable con-
“ tentment.

“ With regard to my children, I am not trou-
“ bled : for that God who hath given them life
“ and breath, and all they have, while I am liv-
“ ing, can provide for them when I am dead.
“ My God will be their God, if they be his ;
“ and if they be not, what comfort would it be
“ for me to live to behold it ? Life would be
“ bitter to me, if I should see them dishonour
“ God, whom I so greatly love.

“ I fear not death—because it is but the sepa-
“ ration of the soul from the body ; and that is
“ but a shadow of the body of death, *Romans* vii.
“ 24. Whereas the separation of the soul from
“ God by sin, and of soul and body for sin, is
“ death indeed, *Isa.* lix. 2.

“ I fear not death—because it is an enemy
“ that hath been often vanquished ; and because
“ I am armed for it ; and the weapons of my
“ warfare are mighty through God, and I am
“ assured of victory.

“ I do not fear death for the pain of it ; for I
“ am

“ am persuaded I have endured as great pain in
“ life, as I shall find in death ; and death will
“ cure me of all sorts of pain. Besides, Christ died
“ a terrible death, to the end any kind of death
“ might be blessed to me. And that God who
“ hath greatly loved me in life, will not neglect
“ me in death, but will, by his Spirit, succour
“ and strengthen me all the time of the combat.”

For her comfort in her last hours, she put into the following form some memoirs of the principal mercies and blessings she had received from God.

“ How shall I praise God for my conversion ?
“ For his word, both in respect of my affection
“ to it, and the wonderful comforts I have had
“ from it ? For hearing of my prayers ? For
“ godly sorrow ? For fellowship with the godly ?
“ For joy in the Holy Ghost ? For the desire of
“ death ? For contempt of the world ? For pri-
“ vate helps and comforts ? For giving me some
“ strength against my sin ? For preserving me
“ from gross evils, both before and after my
“ calling ?” &c.

In her last sickness, which was of long continuance, she often desired to be dissolved ; imploring God, in the words of David,—“ Make

D

“ haste

“haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation! Be
“pleased, O Lord, to deliver me! O Lord, make
“haste to help me!”—And she was relieved in
the tenderest manner; for her spirit departed
from the body, when it was thought she was only
fallen asleep.



Sir MATTHEW HALE, Lord Chief Justice of
England, was born in Gloucestershire, in the
year 1609, and, by the care of a wise and reli-
gious father, had great attention paid to his
education.

In his youth, he was fond of company, and
fell into many levities and extravagancies. But
this propensity and conduct were corrected by
a circumstance, that made a considerable im-
pression on his mind during the rest of his life.
Being one day in company with other students,
one of the party, through excess of wine, fell
down (apparently dead) at their feet. Young
Hale was so affected on this occasion, that he im-
mediately retired to another room, and shutting
the door, fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly
to God that his friend might be restored to life,
and

and that he himself might be forgiven for having given countenance to so much excess.

At the same time he made a solemn vow, that he would never again keep company in that manner, nor—"drink a health"—while he lived. His friend recovered, and he religiously observed his vow to the day of his death. After this event, there was an entire change in his disposition; he forsook all dissipated company, and was careful to divide his time between the duties of religion, and the studies of his profession.

He became remarkable for his solid and grave deportment, his inflexible regard to justice, and a religious tenderness of spirit, which appear to have accompanied him through life. His retired meditations on religious subjects, manifest a pious and humble frame of mind, and contain a solemnity well adapted to excite kindred emotions in the breast of the reader.

We shall select a few of these, as the testimonies of this great and good man to the power and efficacy of religion, as the guide, support, and comfort of our lives.

"True religion (saith he) teaches the soul a high veneration of Almighty God; a sincere and upright walking, as in the presence of the invi-

fible, all-seeing God. It makes a man truly love, honour, and obey him, and therefore careful to know what his will is. It renders the heart highly thankful to him, as his Creator, Redeemer, and Benefactor. It makes a man entirely depend on him, seek him for guidance, direction, and protection, and submit to his will with patience and resignation of soul. It gives the law, not only to his words and actions, but to his very thoughts and purposes; so that he dares not entertain any which are unbecoming the sight and presence of that God, to whom all our thoughts are legible. It crushes all pride and haughtiness, both in a man's heart and carriage, and gives him an humble frame of soul and life, both in the sight of God and men. It regulates and governs the passions of the mind, and brings them into due moderation and frame. It gives a man a right estimate of this present world, and sets the heart and hopes above it; so that he never loves it more than it deserves. It makes the wealth, and the glory of this world, high places, and great preferments, but of low and little value to him; so that he is neither covetous, nor ambitious, nor over-solicitous, concerning the advantages of them. It makes him value the love of God, and peace of conscience, above
all

all the wealth and honour in the world, and to be very diligent to keep it inviolably. He performs all his duties to God in sincerity and integrity ; and, whilst he lives on earth, his conversation, his hopes, his treasures, are in heaven, and he endeavours to walk suitably to such a hope."

Of the inward direction and assistance of the Spirit of God to the soul, he declares as follows :

" Those who truly fear God, have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human ; namely, the Spirit of Truth and Wisdom, that doth really and truly, but secretly, prevent and direct them. Any man that sincerely and truly fears Almighty God, and calls and relies upon him for his guidance and direction, hath it as really as a son hath the counsel and direction of his father : and though the voice be not audible, nor the direction always perceptible, or discernible to sense, yet it is equally as real as if a man heard the voice saying,—“ This is the way—walk in it.”

“ And though this secret direction of Almighty God is principally seen, in matters relating to the good of the soul ; yet it may also be

found in the concerns of this life, which a good man, that fears God, and begs his direction, shall very often, if not at all times, find. I can call my own experience to witness, that, even in the external actions of my whole life, I was never disappointed of the best guidance and direction, when I have, in humility and sincerity, implored the secret direction and guidance of the Divine Wisdom.

“The observance of the secret admonition of this Spirit of God in the heart, is an effectual means to cleanse and sanctify thy heart; and the more it is attended to, the more it will be conversant with thy soul, for thy instruction.—In the midst of thy difficulties, it will be thy counsellor; in the midst of thy temptations, it will be thy strength, and grace sufficient for thee; in the midst of thy troubles, it will be thy light and thy comforter.

“It is impossible for thee to enjoy that which must make thee happy, till thou art deeply sensible of thy own emptiness and nothingness, and thy spirit thereby brought down and laid in the dust.—The Spirit of Christ is an humbling spirit, the more thou hast of it, the more it will humble thee; and it is a sign that either thou hast it not,

or

or that it is yet over-mastered by thy corruptions, if thy heart be still haughty.

“ Watch, therefore, the secret persuasions, and dissuasions of the Spirit of God, and beware thou quench it not, nor grieve it. This wind that blows where it lists, if shut out or resisted, may haply never breathe upon thee again, but leave thee to be hardened in thy sins ; but if observed and obeyed, thou shalt be sure to have it for thy monitor and director, upon all occasions : when thou goest out, it will lead thee, when thou sleepest, it will keep thee, and when thou awakest, it will talk with thee.”

Of the vicissitude of temporal enjoyments, and of his own experience thereof, he gives a striking testimony in the following lines.

“ I HAVE, in the course of my life, had as many stations and places as most men. I have been in almost continual motion ; and although, of all earthly things, I have the most desired rest and retiredness, and a fixed private station, yet the various changes that I have seen and found, the publick employments that, without my seeking, and against my inclination, have been put upon me, and many other interventions, as well

private as publick, have made it literally my experience, that I have had no continuing city or place of habitation. When I had designed for myself a settled mansion in one place, and had fitted it to my convenience and repose, I have been presently constrained by my necessary employments, to leave it, and repair to another: and when again I had thoughts to find repose there, and had again fitted it to my convenience; some other necessary occurrences have diverted me from it. And thus, by several vicissitudes, my dwellings have been like so many inns to a traveller, though of longer continuance, yet of almost equal instability and vicissitude.

“ This unfettledness of station, though troublesome, hath given me a good and practical moral; namely, that I must not expect my rest in this lower world, but must make it as the place of my journey and pilgrimage, not of my repose and rest, but must look further for that happiness. And, truly, when I consider, that it hath been the wisdom of God Almighty, to exercise those worthies whom he left as patterns to the rest of mankind, with this kind of discipline, I have reason not to complain of it as a difficulty or an inconvenience; but to be thankful to him for it

as an instruction and document, to put me in remembrance of a better home, and to incite me to make a due provision for it, even that everlasting rest which he hath provided for them that love him; and by pouring me thus from vessel to vessel, to keep me from fixing myself too much upon this world below.

“ But the truth is, did we consider this world as becomes us, even as wise men, we might easily find, without the help of any discipline of this nature, that this world below neither was intended for, nor indeed can be, a place of rest, but only a laboratory to fit and prepare the souls of the children of men, for a better and more abiding state; a school, to exercise and train us up in habits of patience and obedience, till we are fitted for another station; a little narrow nursery, wherein we may be dressed and pruned, till transplanted into a better paradise..

“ The continual troubles and discomposures, sicknesses and calamities, that attend our lives; the shortness and continued vexations occurring in them; and, finally, the common examples of death and mortality of all ages, sexes, and conditions of mankind, are a sufficient instruction to convince reasonable men, who have the serious-

ness and patience to consider and observe, that we have no abiding city here. And on the other side, if we will but give ourselves leisure to consider the great wisdom of Almighty God, who orders every thing in the world to ends suitable and proportionable; the excellence of the soul and mind of man; the great advances and improvements his nature is capable of; the admirable means which the merciful and wise God hath afforded mankind, by his works of nature and providence, by his word and instruments, to qualify him for a nobler life than this world below can yield, we shall readily confess, that there is another state, another city to come, which it becomes every good, and wise, and considerate man, to look after, and fit himself for. And yet, if we look upon the generality of mankind with a due consideration, they will appear to be like a company of distempered people.—The greatest part of them make it their whole business to provide for a rest and happiness in this world; they make these vain acquests of wealth and honour, and the preferments and pleasures of this world, their great, if not their only business and happiness; and, which is yet a higher degree of frenzy, they esteem this the
only

only wisdom, and judge the careful provision for eternity, the folly of a few weak, melancholy, fanciful men: whereas it is a truth, and in due time it will evidently appear, that those men who are most solicitous for the attaining of their everlasting rest, are the only true wise men, and so shall be acknowledged by those that now despise them. “We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour: How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!” *Wisdom. v. 4.*



JOHN, EARL OF ROCHESTER.

AN illustrious and instructive instance of the Power of Religion on the Mind, in the time of sickness and death, is John, Earl of Rochester. He was the descendant of a great family, of a liberal education, and great personal accomplishments; in short,—(as it is judiciously expressed of him)—“he was a very great man every way; “a great wit, a great scholar, a great poet, a “great sinner, and a great penitent.”

Such he is described to be by two eminent men, who personally knew him, and attended him

him in his last sickness. In this instance God has shewn the richness of his mercy, to save one who seemed to have made a covenant with death, and to be at an agreement with hell. His case appears to be somewhat similar to that of the Apostle Paul, who, though before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, yet obtained mercy, that in him Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life. *1 Tim. i. 13, 16.* He was, as it were, struck to the ground, by a light from heaven, and a voice of thunder round about him; insomuch, that now the scales fell from his eyes, as they once did from Paul's; his stony heart was opened, and streams of tears gushed out, the bitter, but wholesome, tears of true repentance.

He had advanced to an uncommon height of impiety, having been an advocate in the black cause of Atheism. He had raked too in the very bottom of the jakes of debauchery, and had been a satyrist against virtue. But when, like the prodigal in the gospel, he came to himself, great horror filled his mind, and forced sharp and bitter invectives from him, against himself; terming himself the vilest wretch that ever the sun shone upon; wishing he had been a beggar,
a link-

a link-boy, or a crawling leper in a ditch, or had lived in a dungeon, rather than have offended the Lord, as he had done.

Being at one time under great trouble of mind, and his conscience full of terror, he told the person who attended him, that——“ when, on his
“ journey, he had been arguing with greater
“ vigour against God and religion, than he had
“ ever done in his life-time before, and that he
“ resolved to run them down, with all the arguments and spite in the world; but like the
“ great convert, Paul, he found it hard to kick
“ against God :”——For his heart was at that time struck so powerfully, that he argued as much for God and virtue, as ever he had done against them.

He had such tremendous apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, mingled with such delightful contemplations of his nature and perfections, and of the amiableness of religion, that he said,
——“ I never was advanced thus far towards
“ happiness in my life before, though, upon the
“ commission of some sins extraordinary, I have
“ had some checks and warnings considerable
“ from within; but I still struggled with them,
“ and so wore them off again. One day at an
Atheistical

“ Atheistical meeting, at the house of a person of
“ quality, I undertook to manage the cause, and
“ was the principal disputant against God and
“ piety; and, for my performances, received the
“ applause of the whole company. Upon which
“ my mind was terribly struck, and I immedi-
“ ately replied thus to myself,—‘ Good God !
“ that a man who walks upright, who sees the
“ wonderful works of God, and has the use of
“ his senses and reason, should use them to the
“ defying of his Creator !’——But though this
“ was a good beginning towards my conversion,
“ to find my conscience touched for my sins, yet
“ it went off again : nay, all my life long, I had
“ a secret value and reverence for an honest
“ man, and loved morality in others. But I had
“ formed to myself an odd scheme of religion,
“ which would solve all that God, or conscience,
“ might force upon me ; yet I was not ever well
“ reconciled to the business of Christianity, nor
“ had that reverence for the gospel of Christ,
“ which I ought to have had.”

This state of mind continued till the 53d chapter of Isaiah was read to him, together with some other parts of the sacred scriptures ; when it pleased God to fill his mind with such peace and

joy

joy in believing, that it was remarkable to all about him. And he frequently desired those who were with him, to read the 53d of Isaiah to him, upon which he used to descant in a very affectionate paraphrase, applying the weighty sentences thereof to his own humiliation and comfort.

“ Oh ! blessed God ! can such a horrid creature as I am, be accepted by thee, who have denied thy being, and contemned thy power ? Can there be mercy and pardon for me ? Will God own such a wretch as I ? ”

And in the middle of his sickness he said,—
“ Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me ? Oh ! mighty Saviour ! never, but through thine infinite love and satisfaction ! O never, but by the purchase of thy blood ! ”
adding, that—“ with all abhorrence he did reflect upon his former life ; that sincerely, and from his heart, he repented of all that folly and madness which he had committed.”

His faith was strong and cordial in embracing the Christian Religion ; and he justly condemned that—“ foolish and absurd philosophy, which the world so much admired, propagated by the late Hobbes and others, which had un-
“ done

“done him, and many more, of the best parts,
 “in the nation.”—His confidence rested alone
 on Christ for salvation, and therefore appeared to
 be of the right kind. He would often intreat
 God—‘to strengthen his faith,’—crying out,—
 “Lord I believe! help mine unbelief.”

He had a growing esteem for the holy scriptures, and evidently saw their divine usefulness and excellency:—“For, having spoken to his
 “heart, he acknowledged that all the seeming
 “absurdities and contradictions, fancied by men
 “of corrupt and reprobate judgments, were
 “vanished; and that their excellency and beauty
 “appeared, being come to receive the truth in
 “the love of it.”

Satan, the grand adversary of souls, used to assault him with many temptations and evil suggestions, and many things prejudicial to that religious temper of mind with which God had now endued him. One night especially, the Tempter made no little use of his fiery darts, by casting upon him lewd and wicked imaginations: but——“I thank God,” said he, “I abhor them
 “all, and by the power of his grace, which I
 “am sure is sufficient for me, I have overcome
 “them. It is the malice of the devil, because I
 “am

“ am rescued from him, and it is the goodness
“ of God that frees me from all my spiritual
“ enemies.”

There are many proofs of the sincerity of his
faith, and the soundness of his repentance ;
among others, I shall single out those that follow.

His hearty concern for the pious education of
his children ;——“ Wishing his son might never
“ be a wit,—as he explained it,—one of those
“ wretched creatures, who pride themselves in
“ ridiculing God and religion, denying his being
“ or his providence : but that he might become
“ an honest man, and of a truly religious cha-
“ racter, which only could be the support and
“ blessing of his family.”

He left a strict charge to the persons in whose
custody his papers were,——“ To burn all his
“ profane and lewd writings, (as being only fit
“ to promote vice and immorality, by which he
“ had so highly offended, and shamed, and blas-
“ phemed, that holy religion into which he had
“ been baptized) and all his obscene and filthy
“ pictures, which were so notoriously scanda-
“ lous.”

He protested,——“ he would not commit a
“ known

“known sin to gain a kingdom :”—and sent awful messages to his companions in iniquity.

He said to a gentleman of character, who came to see him on his death bed ;——“ O ! remember that you condemn God no more. He is “an avenging God, and will visit you for your “sins ; and will, I hope, in mercy touch your “conscience, sooner or later, as he has done “mine. You and I have been friends and sinners together a great while, therefore I am “the more free with you. We have been all “mistaken in our conceits and opinions ; our “persuasions have been false and groundless ; “therefore God grant you repentance.”

And seeing the gentleman the next day, he said,——“ Perhaps you were disobliged by my “plainness with you yesterday ; I spake the “words of truth and soberness.”——And striking his hand upon his breast, said,——“ I hope “God will touch your heart.”

He laid his commands on the persons who attended him,——“ To spread abroad, and let all “men know, if they knew it not already, how “God had disciplined him for his sins, by his “afflicting hand ; that his sufferings were most “just, though he had laid ten thousand times “more

“ more upon him. That he had laid one stripe
“ upon another, because of his grievous provoca-
“ tions, until he had brought him home to him-
“ self. That his former visitations had not had
“ that blessed effect he was now sensible of.
“ That he had formerly some loose thoughts and
“ flight resolutions of reforming, and designed
“ to be better ; because even the present conse-
“ quences of sin were still pestering him, and
“ were so troublesome and inconvenient to him.
“ But now he had other sentiments of things,
“ and acted upon other principles.”

That none, whom he had been the instrument of drawing into sin, might lose the benefit of his sincere, though late repentance, he subscribed the following recantation, and ordered it to be published to the world :

“ For the benefit of all those whom I may
“ have drawn into sin, by my example and en-
“ couragement, I leave to the world this my last
“ declaration, which I deliver in the presence of
“ the GREAT GOD, who knows the secrets of
“ all hearts, and before whom I am preparing to
“ be judged ; that from the bottom of my soul
“ I detest and abhor the whole course of my
“ former wicked life : that I think I can never
“ sufficiently

“ sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who
“ has given me a true sense of my pernicious
“ opinions, and vile practices ; by which I have
“ hitherto lived, without hope, and without God
“ in the world ; have been an open enemy to
“ Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite to the
“ holy Spirit of Grace ; and that the greatest
“ testimony of my charity to such is, to warn
“ them, in the name of God, and as they regard
“ the welfare of their immortal souls, no more
“ to deny his being or his providence, or despise
“ his goodness ; no more to make a mock of sin,
“ or condemn the pure and excellent religion of
“ my ever blessed Redeemer, thro’ whose merits
“ alone, I, one of the greatest of sinners, do yet
“ hope for mercy and forgiveness. Amen.

“ J. ROCHESTER.

“ Delivered and signed in the presence of

“ ANN ROCHESTER,

“ ROBERT PARSONS.”

We shall now attend him to his bed of languishing and death, and view the power of Religion upon his Mind, in that important season. He seemed to have no desire to live but to testify the truth of his repentance, and to bring glory
to

to God.—“ If God,” says he, “ should spare
“ me yet a little longer time here, I hope to
“ bring glory to his name, proportionably to the
“ dishonour I have done him, in my whole life
“ past; and particularly by endeavours to con-
“ vince others, and to assure them of the danger
“ of their condition, if they continued impeni-
“ tent; and to tell them how graciously God
“ hath dealt with me.”

And when he came within the nearer views
of death, about three or four days before it, he
said,——“ I shall now die. But, O, what un-
“ speakable glories do I feel! What joys, beyond
“ thought or expression, am I sensible of! I am
“ assured of God’s mercy to me, through Jesus
“ Christ. O! how I long to die, and to be
“ with my Saviour!”



GEORGE VILLIERS, Duke of BUCKING-
HAM, and a remarkable character and favourite in
the reign of Charles the Second, was born at
Wallingford House, in the year 1627. “ He
“ was,” says the Earl of Clarendon, “ a man of
“ a noble presence; he had a great liveliness of
“ wit, and a peculiar faculty of turning all things
“ into

“ into ridicule. He had no principles of religion,
“ virtue, or friendship. Pleasure, frolick, or ex-
“ travagant diversion, were all that he laid to
“ heart. He had no steadiness nor conduct; and
“ could never fix his thoughts, nor govern his
“ estate, though at one time, the greatest in Eng-
“ gland. He was bred about the King; and,
“ for many years, had a great ascendant over
“ him: but, at length, he drew a lasting dis-
“ grace upon himself; and ruined both body
“ and mind, fortune and reputation. The
“ madness of vice appeared in him, in very
“ eminent instances; since, at last, he became con-
“ temptible and poor, sickly and sunk in all re-
“ spects; so that his conversation was as much
“ avoided, as ever it had been courted.”

It appears to have been in this deserted and degraded state, mournfully looking over a life spent in vice and folly, that he wrote the following letter to a particular friend, Dr. W——, a short time before his decease.

“ DEAR DOCTOR !

“ I ALWAYS looked upon you to be a person of true virtue, and know you to have a sound understanding: for however I may have acted in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates

dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you, I have always had the highest veneration for both. The world and I shake hands ; for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. O, what a prodigal have I been of that most valuable of all possessions, Time ! I have squandered it away with a profusion unparalleled ; and now, when the enjoyment of a few days would be worth the world, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. How despicable, my dear friend, is that man who never prays to his God, but in the time of distress ? In what manner can he supplicate that Omnipotent Being, in his afflictions, whom, in the time of his prosperity, he never remembered with reverence ?

“ Do not brand me with infidelity, when I tell you that I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions at the throne of grace, or to implore that divine mercy in the next world, which I have scandalously abused in this.

“ Shall ingratitude to man be looked upon as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God ? Shall an insult offered to the king be looked upon in the most offensive light, and yet no notice taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect ?

“ The

“ The companions of my former libertinism would scarcely believe their eyes, were you to shew them this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity : but whoever laughs at me for being right, or pities me for being sensible of my errors, is more entitled to my compassion, than resentment. A future state may well enough strike terror into any man, who has not acted well in this life ; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God. The apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of his understanding.

“ To what a situation am I now reduced ? Is this odious little hut a suitable lodging for a prince ? Is this anxiety of mind becoming the character of a Christian ? From my rank, I might have expected affluence to wait upon my life ; from religion and understanding, peace to smile upon my end : instead of which I am afflicted with poverty, and haunted with remorse ; despised by my country ; and, I fear, forsaken by my God !

“ There is nothing so dangerous as extraordinary abilities : I cannot be accused of vanity now,
by

by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications, especially as I sincerely regret that I ever had them. My rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous; and, fascinated by the general applause which they procured, I never considered the proper means by which they should be displayed. Hence, to procure a smile from a blockhead whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of Heaven, to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but contempt.

“Your men of wit generally look upon themselves as discharged from the duties of religion, and confine the doctrines of the gospel to people of meaner understandings. It is a sort of derogation, in their opinion, to comply with the rules of Christianity; and they reckon that man possessed of a narrow genius, who studies to be good. What a pity that the holy writings are not made the criterion of true judgment! or that any person should pass for a gentleman in this world, but he that appears solicitous about his happiness in the next!

“I am forsaken by all my acquaintance; utterly neglected by the friends of my bosom, and

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the dependents on my bounty : but no matter ! I am not fit to converse with the former, and have no ability to serve the latter. Let me not, however, be wholly cast off by the good. Favour me with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially on a subject I could talk of for ever.

“ I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you ; my distemper is powerful ; come and pray for the departing spirit of the poor unhappy

“ BUCKINGHAM ! ”



Lady RACHEL RUSSELL was born about the year 1636, and was the daughter of the Earl of Southampton.

She appears to have possessed a truly noble mind, a solid understanding, and an amiable and benevolent temper. Her pious resignation, and religious deportment, under the pressure of very deep distress, afford a highly instructive example to others, and an eminent instance of the Power
of

of Religion to sustain the Mind in its greatest trials, and when the waves of affliction may threaten to overwhelm it.

It is well known, that the husband of this lady, William, Lord Russel, was beheaded in the reign of Charles the Second; that he was a man of great merit; and that he sustained the execution of his severe sentence, with Christian and invincible fortitude.

During the period of her illustrious husband's troubles, she conducted herself with a mixture of the most tender affection, and the most surprising magnanimity. She appeared in Court at his trial; and, when the Attorney General told him,—“He might use the hands of one of his
“servants in waiting, to take notes of the evidence for his use,”—Lord Russel answered, that—“he asked none, but that of the Lady that
“sat by him.”—The spectators at these words turning their eyes, and beholding the daughter of the virtuous Southampton rising up to assist her Lord in this his utmost distress, a thrill of anguish ran through the assembly. After his condemnation, she threw herself at the King's feet, and pleaded, but, alas, in vain, the merits and loyalty of her father, in order to save her husband.

When the time of their separation came, her conduct appears to be worthy of the highest admiration; for, without a sigh or tear, she took her last farewell of him, when it might have been expected, as they were so happy in each other,—and no wife could possibly surpass her in affection,—that the torrent of her distress would have overflowed its banks, and been too mighty for restraint.

Lord Russell parted from his Lady with a composed silence; and observing how greatly she was supported, said, after she was gone;——“The bitterness of death is now past;”——for he loved and esteemed her beyond expression. He declared, that——“she had been a great blessing to him; and remarked what a misery it would have been to him, if she had not had that magnanimity of spirit joined to her tenderness, as never to have desired him to do a base thing for the saving of his life.”——He said,——“There was a signal Providence of God, in giving him such a wife, where there were birth, fortune, great understanding, great religion, and great kindness to himself; but her carriage, (said he) in my extremity, was beyond all.”

After

After this most distressing event, the death of her Lord upon the scaffold, this excellent Lady, encompassed with the darkest clouds of affliction, seemed to be absorbed in a religious concern, to behave herself aright towards God under his mighty hand, and to fulfil the duties now devolved upon herself alone, in the care, education, disposal, and happiness of her children; those living remains of her Lord, which had been so dear to him, and which were, for his sake as well as her own, so dear to herself.

The following short extracts from a few of her letters will evince the humble and pious frame of her mind, the great benefit she derived from her afflictions, and the comfortable hope she entertained of her future rest and felicity.

———“ You, my friend, that knew us both and how we lived, must allow I have just cause to bewail my loss. I know it is common with others to lose a friend; but to have lived with such a one, it may be questioned how few can glory in the like happiness, so consequently lament the like loss. Who can but shrink at such a blow, till, by the mighty aid of his Holy Spirit, we let the gift of God, which he hath put into our hearts, interpose? O! if I did steadfastly believe,

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lieve, I could not be dejected ; for I will not injure myself to say I offer my mind any inferior consolation to supply this loss. No ; I most willingly forsake this world——this vexatious, troublesome world ; in which I have no other business, but to rid my soul from sin, and secure my eternal interests ; with patience and courage bear my eminent misfortunes, and ever hereafter be above the smiles and frowns of it : and when I have done the remnant of the work appointed me on earth, then joyfully wait for the heavenly perfection in God's good time, when, by his infinite mercy, I may be accounted worthy to enter into the same place of rest and repose, where he is gone, for whom I grieve.

——“ The future part of my life will not, I expect, pass as perhaps I would just choose. Sense has been long enough satisfied ; indeed so long, I know not how to live by faith ; yet the pleasant stream that fed it near fourteen years together, being gone, I have no sort of refreshment, but when I can repair to that living fountain from whence all flows ; while I look not at the things which are seen, but at those which are not seen, expecting that day which will settle
and

and compose all my tumultuous thoughts, in perpetual peace and quiet.

——“ The consideration of the other world is not only a very great, but, in my small judgment, the only support under the greatest of afflictions that can befall us here. The enlivening heat of those glories, is sufficient to animate and refresh us, in our dark passage through this world ; and though I am below the meanest of God’s servants, who have not in the least degree lived answerable to those opportunities I have had ; yet my Mediator is my Judge, and he will not despise weak beginnings, though there be more smoke than flame. He will help us in believing ; and, though he suffer us to be cast down, will not cast off those who commit their cause to him.—I strive to reflect how large my portion of good things has been ; and though they are passed away, no more to return, yet I have a pleasant work to do, to dress up my soul for my desired change, and fit it for the converse of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect : Among whom, my hope is, my loved Lord is one ; and my often repeated prayer to God is, that, if I have a reasonable ground for that hope, it may give a refreshment to my poor soul.

——“ From the enticing delights of the world, I can now be better weaned. I was too rich in possessions, while I possessed him. All relish now is gone ; I bless God for it ; and pray that I may more and more turn the stream of my affections upwards, and set my heart upon the ever-satisfying perfections of God ; not starting at his darkest providences, but remembering continually, that either his glory, justice, or power, is advanced by every one of them, and that mercy is over all his works ; as we shall one day, with ravishing delight, behold. In the mean-time, I endeavour to suppress all wild imaginations, which a melancholy fancy is apt to let in, and say, with the man in the gospel,——“ I believe ; help thou my unbelief.”

——“ It is the grace of God which disposes me to ask for, and thirst after, such comforts as the world cannot give. What comforts it can give, I am most sure I have felt, and experienced uncertain and perishing. Such I will never more, Grace assisting, look after ; and yet I expect a joyful day after some mournful ones ; and though I walk sadly through the valley of death, I will fear no evil ; humbling myself under the mighty hand of God, who will save in the day
of

of trouble. He knows my sorrows, and the weakness of my person; I commit myself and mine to him.—The saddest state, to a good soul, will one day end in rest. This is my best comfort, and a greater we cannot have; yet the degree is raised, when we consider that we shall not only rest, but live in regions of unspeakable bliss. This should lead us sweetly through the dark passage of the world; and suffer us to start at nothing we either meet with, or our fears suggest may happen to us.”

To Lady Essex, she wrote the following letter:—

———“ I BESEECH God one day to speak peace to our afflicted minds, and let us not be disappointed of our great hope. But we must wait for our day of consolation, till this world passes away: an unkind and trustless world this has been to us. Why it has been such, God knows best. All his dispensations serve the end of his providences; and they are ever beautiful, and must be good, and good to every one of us; and even these dismal ones are so to us, if we can bare evidence to our own souls, that we are better for our afflictions; which often God

makes them to be to such who suffer wrongfully. We may reasonably believe our friends find that rest we but yet hope for; and what better comfort can your Ladyship or I desire, in this valley of the shadow of death we are walking through? The rougher our path is, the more delightful and ravishing will the great change be to us."

She survived Lord Russell above forty years, and continued his widow to the end of her life. She died in the year 1723, in the 87th year of her age.

Her continued hope and trust in HIM, who had been the staff of her life, and her support in affliction, is evidenced by the following declaration, made not long before the end of her days. ——" God has not denied me the support of his
" holy Spirit, in this my long day of calamity ;
" but enabled me, in some measure, to rejoice in
" him as my portion for ever ; who has provided
" a remedy for all our griefs, by his sure pro-
" mises of another life, where there is no death,
" nor any pain nor trouble, but fulness of joy,
" in the presence of God who made us, and loves
" us for ever."

MARY,

MARY, QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN, WIFE
OF KING WILLIAM THE THIRD.

SHE was the daughter of James, Duke of York, afterwards King James the Second, and the Lady Ann Hyde, daughter of the Earl of Clarendon.

She appeared to be happily disposed from very early life, being good and gentle before she was capable of knowing that it was her duty to be so. This temper grew up with her through the whole progress of her childhood. She might need instruction, but she wanted no persuasion. And it is said, that she never once, in the whole course of her education, gave any occasion to reprove her. Besides a most amiable sweetness of temper, she possessed great understanding, and a mind cultivated with useful learning and knowledge.

She was married in the sixteenth year of her age, and went to reside in Holland with her husband, who was then Prince of Orange; where she conducted herself with so much wisdom and goodness, as to gain universal esteem and affection. But that which was, beyond all comparison, her greatest ornament and possession, was her being of—"a meek and quiet spirit,"—of a truly devout and religious temper; which caused
her

her to look with indifference on the honours and splendour with which she was surrounded ; and to seek for her highest enjoyment, in doing good ; in peace of mind ; and in the hope of a better life.

In proof of her uncommon merit, we may here insert a short declaration concerning her, made by her husband, King William, whom she loved entirely, and who best knew her excellence, and his own great loss in being deprived of her. When Doctor Tennison, upon her death, went to comfort the King, he answered ; that——
“ he could not but grieve, since he had lost a
“ wife who, in seventeen years, had never been
“ guilty of an indiscretion ; that, during the
“ whole course of their marriage, he had never
“ known one single fault in her ; and that she
“ possessed a worth that no body thoroughly
“ knew but himself.”

In the preceding character of Lady Ruffel, we have seen the Power and Operation of Religion on the Mind, under some of the darkest clouds of affliction and distress : in the present instance, of Queen Mary, the virtue and preserving nature of the same Divine Principle, when submitted to, is evidenced amidst the magnificence of a court,
and

and the sunshine of worldly prosperity. It is, indeed, a principle of universal agency; adapted to all ranks of men, and to every allotment of Providence; a sure preservative when things are smiling around us, and a sovereign remedy or support under all the calamities of life.

This excellent Queen disposed of a great part of her time, in perusing the Holy Scriptures, and other religious books; and, by a letter to her father, written in early life, in support of the Protestant faith, she appears to have been thoroughly grounded and established in the principles of the Reformation. Bishop Burnet says, that—
“ although he had a high opinion of the Prin-
“ cefs’s good understanding, before he saw this
“ letter, yet the letter surpris’d him, and gave
“ him an astonishing joy to see so young a person,
“ all on a sudden, without consulting any one,
“ able to write so solid and learned a letter.”

Her talents and abilities were very conspicuous in all her concerns, and particularly in the important charge of Government. Doctor Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury, said, that—
“ he was in great admiration at the proofs he
“ knew the Queen gave of her accomplishments,
“ in the weighty affairs of state, in the King’s ab-
“ sence,

“ fence, when the executive part of the Govern-
“ ment was in her hands.”

Her compassion and bounty to the poor and afflicted, and those who stood in need of her liberality, were very eminent, and such as corresponded with her exalted station, and the abundant sources of relief to which she had access. She took care to have a just account both of the worthiness, and the necessities, of those who were candidates for her liberality; and, in the conducting of her charity, shewed as great an exactness, attention, and diligence, as if she had had no cares of a higher nature. But what crowned all, was her exact conformity to the rule of the Gospel in her munificence; for none knew to whom, or what she gave, but those whom she was obliged to employ in the communication of her bounty.

The piety of this excellent person, as it was a noble support to her, under some kinds of trouble, so it gave the sharper edge to others. The impieties and blasphemies, the open contempt of religion, and the scorn of virtue, which she heard of from many hands, and from many different parts of the nation, gave her a secret horror, and presented her with such a gloomy prospect, as
filled

filled her with melancholy reflections. She was very sensibly touched, when she heard that some, who pretended to much zeal for the Crown and the Revolution, seemed thence to think they had a sort of right to be indulged in their licentiousness, and irregularities. She often said,——
“ Can a blessing be expected from such hands, or
“ on any thing that must pass through them ?”

She had a just esteem of all persons whom she found truly religious and virtuous ; nor could any other considerations weigh much with her, when these excellencies were not to be found. Next to open impiety, the want of life in those who pretended to religion, and the deadness and disunion of the protestants in general, very much affected her ; and she often said, with poignant regret,——“ Can such dry bones live ?”

So far was she from entertaining a high opinion of herself, that she had a tender sense of any thing that looked like a miscarriage under her conduct, and was afraid lest some mistake of hers might have occasioned it. And when difficulties grew too great to be surmounted, and she felt an uneasiness in them, she made God her refuge ; and often owned, that she found a full calm upon her thoughts, after she had given them

them a free vent before him in prayer. When melancholy events came from the hand of Providence, she said, that——“ though there was no
“ occasion for complaint or anger, upon these
“ cross occurrences, yet there was just cause of
“ grief, since God’s hand was to be seen so particularly in them.”——Sometimes she feared there might be some secret sins at the root, and blast all ; but she would soon correct herself, and say, that——“ where so much was visible, there
“ was no need of divination concerning that
“ which might be hidden.”

In her brightest seasons, she grew not secure, nor did she withdraw her dependence upon God. In the pleasures of life, she maintained a true indifference as to their continuance, and seemed to think of parting with them, in so easy a manner, as plainly shewed how little possession they had of her heart.

At one period, she felt such indisposition of body, as induced her to believe that some great sickness was approaching ; but on this occasion, she felt great quietude and resignation in the prospect of her dissolution, and said, that——
“ though she did not pray for death, yet she
“ could neither wish nor pray against it. She
“ left

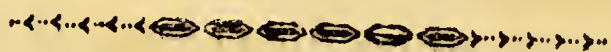
“ left that to God, and referred herself to the
“ disposal of Providence. If she did not wish
“ for death, yet she did not fear it.”

As this was the state of her mind, when she viewed that event at some distance, so she maintained the same composure, when in the closest struggle with it. The end of this extraordinary Queen, was indeed such as might have been presumed, from the pure and exemplary life she had lived. When she was first informed of the danger to be apprehended from her disorder, (which was the small-pox) she replied ;——“ I have been
“ instructed how very hazardous a thing it is to
“ rely upon a death-bed repentance ; and I am
“ not now to begin the great work of preparing
“ for death ; and I praise God I am not afraid
“ of it.”——Under the weight of her disorder, which was very trying to nature, she appeared to feel no inward depression or discouragement of mind ; a willingness to die, and an entire resignation to the will of God, accompanied her to the closing scene ; in the near approach of which, she declared, that——“ she experienced
“ the joys of a good conscience, and the Power
“ of Religion giving her supports, which even
“ the last agonies could not shake.”

Thus

Thus died this most excellent Princess ; and, no doubt, passed from an earthly to an heavenly crown,—“a crown of glory that shall never fade away.”

The contemplation of such peaceful and happy conclusions of life, is sufficient, at times, to elevate the soul, and to make all the glories and enjoyments of this world sink into nothing.—Ah !—these are favoured, precious moments, when the Divine Power of Religion breaks in upon us, dissolves the enchantment of the world, dissipates the mist of vain doubts and speculation, and raises a fervent aspiration, that whatever may be our allotment through life, the death of the righteous may be ours, and the love of God our portion for ever !



THE DYING ADVICE OF DUNCAN FORBES,
LORD PRESIDENT OF SCOTLAND.

——“ I WILL conclude with that which is the most important of all things, and which alone will carry every thing else along with it ; which is, to recommend, in the most solemn and serious manner, the study and practice of religion

gion to all sorts of men, as that which is both the light of the world, and salt of the earth.

“ Nothing does so open our faculties, and compose and direct the whole man, as an inward sense of God ; of his authority over us ; of the laws he hath set us ; of his eye over us ; of his hearing our prayers ; assisting our endeavours ; watching over our concerns ; of his being to judge, and reward or punish us in another state according to what we do in this. Nothing will give a man such a detestation of sin, and such a sense of the goodness of God, and of our obligations to holiness, as a right understanding and firm belief of the Christian Religion. Nothing can give a man so calm a peace within, and such a firm security against all fears and dangers without, as the belief of a kind, wise Providence, and of a future state.

“ Integrity of heart gives a man courage and confidence that cannot be shaken. A man is sure, that by living according to the rules of religion, he becomes the wisest, the best, and the happiest creature that he is capable of being. Honest industry, the employing of time well, a constant sobriety, and undefiled purity and chastity, with a quiet serenity, are the best preservatives

tives too of life and health; so that take a man as an individual, religion is his guard, his perfection, his beauty, and his glory. This will make him a light in the world, shining brightly, and enlightening many round about him.

“Thus, religion, if truly received and sincerely adhered to, would prove the greatest of all blessings to a nation. But, by religion, I understand something more than the receiving of some doctrines, though ever so true, or the professing of them, and engaging to support them, not without zeal and eagerness. What signify the best doctrines, if men do not live suitably to them; if they have not a due influence upon their thoughts and their lives? Men of bad lives, with sound opinions, are self-condemned, and lie under a highly aggravated guilt.

“By religion, I do not mean an outward compliance with forms and customs, in going to church, to prayers, to sermons, and to sacraments, with an external shew of devotion; or, which is more, with some inward forced good thoughts, in which many satisfy themselves, while these have no visible effect on their lives, nor any inward force to subdue and rectify their appetites, passions, and secret designs. Those customary perform-

performances, how good and useful soever when understood and rightly directed, are of little value when men rest on them, and think, because they do them, they have acquitted themselves of their duty, though they continue still proud, covetous, full of deceit, envy, and malice. Even secret prayers, the most effectual means, are designed for a higher end ; which is, to possess our minds with such a constant and present sense of divine truths, as may make these live in us, and govern us, and draw down such assistance, as to exalt and sanctify our natures.

“ So that, by religion, I mean such a sense of divine truth as enters into a man, and becomes the spring of a new nature within him ; reforming his thoughts and designs ; purifying his heart ; sanctifying and governing his whole deportment, his words as well as his actions ; convincing him that it is not enough not to be scandalously vicious, or to be innocent in his conversation, but that he must be entirely, uniformly, and constantly, pure and virtuous, animated with zeal to be still better and better, more eminently good and exemplary.

“ This is true religion, which is the perfection of human nature, and the joy and delight of every one that feels it active and strong within him.

him. It is true, this is not arrived at all at once, and it will have an unhappy alloy, hanging long even about a good man; but, as those ill mixtures are the perpetual grief of his soul, so that it is his chief care to watch over, and to mortify them, he will be in a continual progress, still gaining ground upon himself; and as he attains to a degree of purity, he will find a flame of life and joy growing up in him. Of this I write with a greater concern and emotion, because I have felt this the true, and, indeed, the only joy which runs through a man's heart and life. It is that which hath been, for many years, my greatest support. I rejoice daily in it. I feel from it the earnest of that supreme joy which I want and long for; and I am sure there is nothing else which can afford any true and complete happiness."



THERE are few greater instances of the comfortable Power of Religion on the Mind, in the time of need, than that which was exhibited by an excellent and pious gentlewoman of the name of HOUSMAN, when she drew near the close of life.

She

She was born at Kidderminster, of religious parents, who early instructed her in the duties of religion.

By her diary, it appears she was brought under lively impressions of divine things, at thirteen years of age. From 1711, when her diary begins, to 1735, the time of her death, her life appears to have been a walk in the fear of God.

The following account of her last illness and death, was drawn up by a person that attended her throughout.

From the time of her first seizure, she was exercised with very violent pains, without any intermission till her death; such as, she would often say, she thought she could not have borne: —“ But,” said she, “ God is good; verily he is “ good to me! I have found him a good and “ gracious God to me all my days.”

Again, when recovering out of extreme pain; —“ God is good; I have found him so; and “ though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. “ These pains make me love my Lord Jesus the “ better. O they put me in mind what he suffered for me, to purchase salvation for my poor “ soul! Why me, Lord! why me, the greatest “ of sinners? Why me, that stood it out so long “ against

“ against the rich offers of thy grace, and the
“ kind invitations of the Gospel? How many
“ helps and means have I enjoyed more than
“ many others; yea, above the most!—I had a
“ religious father and mother; and I had access
“ to a valuable minister, to whom I could often
“ and freely open my mind. I have lived in a
“ golden age. I have lived in peaceable times,
“ wherein I have enjoyed great advantages and
“ helps for communion with God, and the peace
“ of my own mind; for which I owe my graci-
“ ous God and Father more praises than words
“ can express. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and
“ all that is within me bless his holy name!
“ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all,
“ or any of his benefits!”

She often said, that she could not find words to express the goodness of God to her, it had been so great and manifold.—“ O let all know I
“ am not afraid of death; but the pains of dy-
“ ing may be terrible! I know not yet what
“ they will be.”

When any were weeping and mourning over her, she would say;—“ Weep not for me: it
“ is the will of God; therefore be content. If it
“ may be for his honour and glory, he will spare
“ me

“ me a little longer ; if not, I am wholly resigned
“ to the will of God. I am content to stay here,
“ as long as he has doing or suffering work for
“ me ; and I am willing to go, if it be my Fa-
“ ther’s good pleasure. Therefore be content,
“ and say,—It is the Lord, let him do what
“ seemeth him good.”

To a gentlewoman that came to see her, she
said;—“ Cousin, I think I shall die: and now,
“ what a comfort it is that I am not afraid of
“ death ! The blood of Christ cleanseth me from
“ all sin. But mistake me not ; there must be a
“ life and conversation agreeable to the Gospel,
“ or else our faith in Christ is a dead faith. Se-
“ cure Christ for your friend; set not your heart
“ on things below ; riches and honours, and
“ what the world calls pleasures, are all fading,
“ perishing things.”

She then threw out her hand, and said,—
“ O if I had thousands and ten thousands of gold
“ and silver lying by me, what could they do for
“ me, now I am dying ? Therefore take the ad-
“ vice of a dying friend that wishes you well.
“ Do not set your affections on riches, or any
“ thing here below. Remember, death will
“ come, whether you are ready or unready, wil-

“ling or unwilling, in a little while. I com-
“mend you to God. I wish you well; and
“hope, in a short time we shall meet again in
“heaven, that place of perfect happiness, rest,
“and joy.”

Throughout the whole time of her sickness, she was in a cheerful, thankful frame. When she was cold, and had something warm given her, she would say,——“Blessed be God for all his
“mercies; and blessed be God for this comfort
“in my passage through this wilderness world.”

When the above-mentioned person that attended her, warmed a piece of flannel, and put it round her cold hands, she thanked her for it, and said,——“O how many mercies I have! I
“want for nothing. Here is every thing I can
“wish for. I can say, I never wanted any good
“thing. I want nothing but an easy passage to
“glory. It was free Grace that plucked me from
“the very brink of hell; and it is the power of
“divine Grace that has supported me through
“the whole of my life. Hitherto, I can say the
“Lord is gracious. He hath been very merci-
“ful to me, in supporting me under all my trials.
“The Lord brings affliction, but it is not be-
“cause he delights to afflict his children: it is
“at

“ at all times for our profit. I can say, it hath
“ been good for me to be afflicted; it hath en-
“ abled me to discern things, which, when I was
“ in health, I could not: it hath made me see
“ more of the vanity and emptiness of this world,
“ and all its creature-comforts; for at best they
“ are but vanity. Vanity and vexation of spirit
“ may be justly written upon them all. I can
“ say, from my own experience, I have found
“ them to be so many a time.”

To her husband, the day before she died, she
said, ——“ Dear, I think I am going apace; and
“ I hope you will be satisfied, because it is the
“ will of God. You have at all times been very
“ suitable, very loving and good to me: and I
“ thank you for it kindly: and now I desire you
“ freely to resign and give me up to God. If
“ God see it best to prolong my stay here upon
“ earth, I am willing to stay; or if he see it best
“ to take me to himself, I am willing to go. I
“ am willing to be and bear what may be most
“ for God’s glory.”

The evening before she died, she found death
stealing upon her, and feeling her own pulse,
said, ——“ Well, it will be but a little while be-
“ fore my work will be done in this world.

“ Then I shall have done with prayer. My
“ whole employment then, will be praise and
“ love. Here, I love God but faintly, yet, I
“ hope, sincerely ; but there, it will be perfectly.
“ I shall behold his face in righteousness ; for I
“ am thy servant ; Lord, I am thy servant, bought
“ with blood, with precious blood. Christ died
“ to purchase the life of my soul. A little while,
“ and then I shall be singing that sweet song,—
“ Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power,
“ be unto HIM that sitteth upon the throne, and
“ to the Lamb for ever and ever.”

With smiles in her face, and transports of joy, she would often say,—“ Come, Lord Jesus,
“ come quickly ! Why are thy chariot wheels
“ so long in coming ? Why tarry the wheels of
“ thy chariot ? O blessed convoy ! come and
“ fetch my soul to dwell with God, and Christ,
“ and perfect spirits for ever and ever. When
“ I get to that blessed society above, my pleasures
“ will never end. O the glory, the glory that
“ shall be set on the head of faith and love !”

A few minutes before her departure, finding herself going, she desired to be lifted up which was done ; and then she cheerfully said,—
“ Farewel, sin ! farewel, pains !”—and so finished her course with joy.

THE

THE HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE, that most exact searcher into the works of Nature, and who saw Atheism and Infidelity beginning to shew themselves in the loose and voluptuous reign of King Charles the Second, pursued his philosophical inquiries with religious views, to establish the minds of men in a firm belief and thorough sense of the infinite power and wisdom of the great Creator.

This eminent philosopher, and truly good man, was the son of Richard, the first Earl of Cork in Ireland; and was born in the year 1727. He was not more distinguished by the nobility of his birth and family, than by his talents and great attainments in learning and knowledge.

He was strongly solicited by Lord Clarendon to enter into ecclesiastical orders; which, however, for several reasons, he thought it his duty to decline. Bishop Burnet, to whom he communicated memorandums concerning his own life, tells us, that what had the greatest weight in determining his judgment on this subject, was,—“The not feeling within himself
“any motion or tendency of mind, which he
“could safely esteem a call from the Holy Spirit;

“ and so not venturing to take holy orders, lest
“ he should be found to have lied unto it.”

The Bishop, who was intimately acquainted with him, observes, that——“ it appeared from
“ those who conversed with him on his inquiries
“ into Nature, that his main design in that (on
“ which as he had his own eye constantly, so he
“ took care to put others often in mind of it) was
“ to raise in himself and others, vaster thoughts
“ of the greatness and glory, and of the wisdom
“ and goodness of God.”—This was so deep in his thoughts, that he concludes the article of his will, which relates to the Royal Society, in these words :——“ Wishing them a happy success in
“ their attempts to discover the true nature of
“ the works of God ; and praying that they
“ and all other searchers into physical truths,
“ may cordially refer their attainments, to the
“ glory of the great Author of Nature, and to
“ the comfort of mankind.”

In another place, the same person speaks of him thus :—“ He had the profoundest veneration
“ for the great God of heaven and earth, that I
“ ever observed in any man. The very name
“ of God was never mentioned by him, without
“ a pause and visible stop in his discourse.”

The

The veneration he had for the Holy Scriptures appears, not only from his studying them with great attention, and exhorting others to do the same; but, more particularly, from a distinct treatise which he wrote on purpose to defend the scripture style, and to answer all the objections which profane and irreligious persons have made against it. And his zeal in propagating Christianity in the world, appears by many and large benefactions to that end.

Such were the strictness and exemplariness of this great and good man's life, through the whole course of it, that Bishop Burnet says;—"I
" might challenge the whole tribe of libertines
" to come and view the usefulness as well as
" the excellency of the Christian Religion, in a
" life that was entirely dedicated to it."



JOHN LOCKE, a very celebrated philosopher, and one of the greatest men that England ever produced, was born in the year 1632. His sound judgment, and accurate talent in reasoning, are highly commended, even by the Scepticks and Infidels of our times.

This enlightened man shewed his zeal for the Christian Religion, first, in his middle age, by publishing a discourse on purpose to demonstrate the reasonableness of believing Jesus to be the promised Messiah; and after that, in the latter years of his life, by a very judicious commentary upon several of the epistles of the Apostle Paul.

The Scriptures are every where mentioned by him with the greatest reverence; and he exhorts Christians,——“to betake themselves in earnest
“to the study of the way to salvation, in those
“holy writings, wherein God has revealed it
“from heaven, and proposed it to the world;
“seeking our religion where we are sure it is in
“truth to be found, comparing spiritual things
“with spiritual.”

In a letter, written the year before his death, to one who asked this question,——“What is the
“shortest and surest way for a young man to
“attain to the true knowledge of the Christian
“Religion?”—His answer is;—“Let him study
“the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament: therein are contained the words of
“eternal life. It has God for its Author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any
“mixture

“mixture of error, for its matter.”——A direction that was copied from his own practice in the latter part of his life, when, for——
“fourteen or fifteen years, he applied himself, in an especial manner, to the study of the Scriptures, and employed the last years of his life hardly in any thing else. He was never weary of admiring the great views of that sacred book, and the just relation of all its parts : he every day made discoveries in it that gave him fresh cause of admiration.”

The consolation which he derived from Divine Revelation, is forcibly expressed in these words :
——“I gratefully receive and rejoice in the light of Revelation, which hath set me at rest in many things, the manner whereof my poor reason can by no means make out to me.

After he had diligently employed a great part of his life in a variety of occupations, he chose a pleasing retirement for the remainder of his days. This leisure appears to have been productive of solid improvement ; and, on the retrospect of life, to have afforded a deep conviction of the vanity attendant on the love and too earnest pursuit of the world, and of its insuffi-

ciency, at best, to confer true and lasting happiness.

The summer before his death, he began to be very sensible of his approaching dissolution. He often spoke of it, and always with great composure. A short time before his decease, he declared to a friend, that——“ he was in the
“ sentiments of perfect charity towards all men;
“ and of a sincere union with the Church of
“ Christ, under whatever name distinguished.”

The day before his death, Lady Masham being alone with him, and sitting by his bed-side, he exhorted her to regard this world only as a state of preparation for a better; adding, that——
“ he had lived long enough, and thanked God
“ for having passed his life so comfortably; but
“ that this life appeared to him mere vanity.”

The same day he particularly advised all about him to read the Scriptures; and desired to be remembered by them at evening prayers. Being told that, if he chose it, the whole family should be with him in his chamber, he said he should be very glad to have it so, if it would not give too much trouble: and an occasion offering to speak of the goodness of God, he especially exalted the care which God shewed to man in
justifying

justifying him by faith in Jesus Christ; and returned God thanks, in particular, for having blessed him with the knowledge of that Divine Saviour.

About two months before his death, he drew up a letter to his friend, Anthony Collins, and left this direction upon it:—"To be delivered
" to him after my decease."

THE FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF IT:

" I KNOW you loved me living, and will preserve my memory when I am dead. All the use to be made of it is; that this life is a scene of vanity, which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hopes of another life. This is what I can say upon experience, and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account.

" Adieu! I leave my best wishes with you.

" JOHN LOCKE."

JOSEPH ADDISON, Esq. one of the Principal Secretaries of State in the reign of King George the First, but who derived less dignity from his publick office and situation in life, than from his private character and religious writings, was born in 1672, at Ambresbury in Wiltshire.

He has given abundant proof of his belief of Christianity, and his zeal against unbelievers, in his—"Evidences of the Christian Religion."—His writings on religious subjects, discover a pious and solid frame of mind; and his general conduct in life, gives us a convincing proof, that what he wrote was the genuine feelings of his heart.

The following lines of his, are sweetly expressive of the peace and pleasure which he derived from the sure hope of another and a better life:—"The prospect of a future state is the
"secret comfort and refreshment of my soul:
"It is that which makes nature look cheerful
"about me; it doubles all my pleasures, and
"supports me under all my afflictions. I can
"look at disappointments and misfortunes, pain
"and sickness, death itself, with indifference, so
"long as I keep in view the pleasures of eternity, and the state of being in which there
"will

“ will be no fears nor apprehensions, pains nor
“ sorrows.”

But his virtue shone out brightest at the point of death ; for, after a long and manly, but vain struggle with his distempers, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life ; but with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living, but sent for a youth nearly related, and finely accomplished, yet not above being the better for good impressions from a dying friend. He came ; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent. After a decent and proper pause, the youth said,——
“ Dear Sir ! you sent for me : I believe, and
“ hope, you have some commands : I shall hold
“ them most dear.”——May the reader not only feel the reply, but retain its impression ! Forcibly grasping the youth’s hand, he softly said,——
—“ See in what peace a Christian can die.”——
He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired.

Through Divine Grace, how great is man !
Through Divine Mercy, how stingsless death !

Sir

SIR ISAAC NEWTON is universally acknowledged to have been the most profound philosopher that this, or perhaps any other nation has produced: the vastness of his mental powers has excited the admiration of the greatest geniuses in Europe.

He was born in Lincolnshire, in the year 1642; and besides his great philosophical character, he was remarkable for being of a very meek disposition, and a great lover of peace. He would rather have chosen to remain in obscurity, than to have the calm of life ruffled by those storms and disputes, which genius and learning often draw upon those who are eminent for them. We find him reflecting on the controversy respecting his optick lectures (into which he was almost unavoidably engaged) in the following terms:—"I blamed my own imprudence, for
" parting with so real a blessing as my quiet, to
" run after a shadow."

This excellent person is well known to have been a firm believer, and a serious Christian. His discoveries concerning the frame and system of the universe, were applied by him to demonstrate the being of a God, and to illustrate his power and wisdom in the creation.

He

He applied himself also, with great attention, to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and considered the several parts of them with uncommon exactness; particularly, as to the order of time, and the series of prophecies and events relating to the Messiah. Upon this head, he has left behind him an excellent discourse, to prove that the famous prophecy of Daniel's weeks, was an express prediction of the coming of the Messiah, and that it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The testimony of the learned Dr. Doddridge to the most interesting part of this great man's character, cannot be omitted on this occasion.

——“According to the best information,”—
says he, “whether publick or private, I could
“ever obtain, his firm faith in the Divine Re-
“velation discovered itself in the most genuine
“fruits of substantial virtue and piety; and con-
“sequently gives us the justest reason to con-
“clude, that he is now rejoicing in the happy
“effects of it, infinitely more than in all the ap-
“plause which his philosophical works have pro-
“cured him, though they have commanded a
“fame lasting as the world.”

The disorder of which he died, was supposed to be the stone in the bladder; which was, at times,

times, attended with such severe paroxysms, as forced out large drops of sweat that run down his face. In these trying circumstances, he was never observed to utter the least complaint, nor to express the least impatience.

He departed this life in the eighty-fifth year of his age; and, in his principles, and conduct through life, has left a strong and comfortable evidence, that the highest intellectual powers harmonize with religion and virtue; and that there is nothing in Christianity but what will abide the scrutiny of the soundest and most enlarged understanding.

How great and satisfactory a confirmation is it to the sincere, humble Christian, and what an insurmountable barrier does it present to the infidel mind, to perceive, in the list of Christian believers, the exalted and venerable names of Bacon, Newton, Boyle, Locke, Addison, and Lyttleton: men who must be acknowledged to be ornaments of human nature, when we consider the wide compass of their abilities, the great extent of their learning and knowledge, and the piety, integrity, and beneficence, of their lives. These eminent characters firmly adhered to the belief of Christianity, after the most diligent and exact researches

searches into the life of its founder, the authenticity of its records, the completion of the prophecies, the sublimity of its doctrines, the purity of its precepts, and the arguments of its adversaries.



LADY HASTINGS.

A LIVELY instance of the Power and Support of Religion, we have in the life, sufferings, and death, of the Lady Elizabeth Hastings.

An ingenuous temper, a quickness of understanding, a benevolent spirit, a flexibility of nature, and a solemn sense of divine things, were observable in her tender age; and in the dangerous ascent of life, her feet were guided and preserved in the paths of rectitude and goodness; so that she was not only free from the stain of vice in her rising years, but superior to the world, and its vain and trifling amusements. Through the whole course of her time, her lamp shone brightly; and, in mature age diffused its light and influence in a wide extent around her.

It appears that the great aim of her life was to promote the glory of God, and the welfare of men;

men ; keeping her capacities, talents, and extensive fortune, continually upon the stretch, for the benefit of her fellow-creatures. Of all her cares, a most especial one was that of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow ; the needy, and him that hath no helper ; the lame, the halt, and the blind ! These objects drew out the compassions of her soul. She participated in their sufferings ; and would often converse with them, and inquire into their history, with great condescension. She studied their particular cases, and put them in the way of a better condition. She often visited them in sickness, bore the expences of it ; and, no doubt, endeavoured to cheer and encourage them under all the apparent hardships of their allotment.

The evening of her day was distinguished by great bodily affliction, having a cancer in the breast, for which she underwent an amputation. But in all her sufferings from this cause, and even under the trying operation, her religious fortitude and serenity of mind did not forsake her. The resignation of her spirit to the dispensations of Divine Providence, is strongly marked by the following expressions, which dropped from her during the course of this painful distemper :

——“ I

——“ I would not wish to be out of my present
“ situation for all the world ; nor exchange it for
“ any other at any price.”

The night subsequent to the operation, was not, indeed, one of much sleep, but it was a night of celestial peace ; a time of thanksgiving to her God, for the visible demonstration of his power in and about her ; for his stretched out arm in her great deliverance ; for the bountiful provisions he had made for all the occasions of her soul and body ; and, in a word, for all his blessings conferred upon her.

She was, sooner than expected, restored to a comfortable state of health, and to that life of charity and beneficence, which was the joy of her heart : but the disorder—repressed only for a time—appeared again with new malignity, and at length put a period to all the sorrows of mortality. Her lamp and her life were, however, to be extinguished together, and she occupied till her Lord came.

A short season before her departure, animated with impressions of Divine Goodness, she broke out, with a raised accent, in the following manner :——“ Lord ! what is it that I see ? O the
“ greatness

“greatness of the glory that is revealed in me!—
“that is before me!”——so abundant appears
to have been her entrance into the everlasting
kingdom of her Lord and Saviour.

The truly religious, whose evidences for
heaven are clear, rational, and well founded,
have at times, in their travel through life, a tide
of joy springing up in their minds, beyond expres-
sion; something more moving and satisfactory
than any can imagine, but they who perceive it.
And when they are just entering upon the pro-
mised land, they are sometimes favoured to have
the splendour of the eternal day dawn upon
them, and to shine as through the breaches of
their shattered bodies; raising in their spirits
such an earnest of happiness, such foretastes of
joy, as enable them to pass through the valley of
death in peace and triumph.

What a rich reward for all the crosses and
conflicts of this probationary scene! and how
animating a source of encouragement, during
our pilgrimage, to rise above, and look beyond,
all the troubles of time!

Col.

Col. JAMES GARDINER, a person of distinguished character, was for many years of his life greatly addicted to sensual pleasures. With a strong constitution of body, great flow of animal spirits, fine personal accomplishments, and a large circle of gay and dissipated companions, he seemed as amply qualified as most men, to range in the field of animal enjoyments, and to extract from it all that it is capable of yielding. Yet this complete sensualist, in the meridian of his joys, bitterly experienced, that——“even in
“laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end
“of that mirth is heaviness.”

Being at one time congratulated, by some of his dissolute companions, on his distinguished felicity, and a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself,——“O!
“that I were that dog! ——Such was then his happiness; and such perhaps is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in the contempt of religion, and glory in that miserable servitude which they affect to call liberty.

His continual neglect of the great Author of his being, of whose perfections he could not doubt, and to whom he knew himself to be under

der daily and perpetual obligations, gave him, in some moments of involuntary reflection, inexpressible remorse; and this, at times, wrought upon him to such a degree, that he resolved he would attempt to pay him some acknowledgments. Accordingly, for a time, he did it; repeating, in retirement, some passages out of the Psalms, and perhaps other scriptures, which he still retained in his memory; and owning, in a few strong words, the many mercies and deliverances he had received, and the ill returns he had made for them. But these strains were too devout to continue long in a heart as yet quite un sanctified: for how readily soever he could repeat acknowledgments of the Divine power, presence, and goodness, and own his follies and faults, he was stopt short by the remonstrances of his conscience, as to the flagrant absurdity of confessing sins he did not desire to forsake, and of pretending to praise God for his mercies, when he did not endeavour to live in his service, and to behave in such manner as gratitude, if sincere, would plainly dictate.

At length it pleased the Author of all good, so to visit his soul, that, heartily joining therewith, he became a sincere penitent, and continued the
remainder

remainder of his days, a bright and steady example of virtue and goodness. His gratitude to God for his singular deliverance, his continued sense of the friendship of so gracious a Being, and his unshaken hope of eternal happiness, filled his heart with unutterable peace and joy; and caused abundant compassion for those unhappy persons who prefer the transient amusements of a day, to the highest of all enjoyments, the perpetual love and favour of an Almighty Friend. Many of his letters, and particularly the following ones to his wife, and to an intimate acquaintance, testify his favoured state of mind, and how great was his enjoyment in communion with the Father of Spirits.

“ I bless God, I was never better in my life ;
“ and I wish I could be so happy as to hear the
“ same of you ; or rather (in other words) to
“ hear that you had obtained an entire trust in
“ God. That would infallibly keep you in per-
“ fect peace ; for the God of truth hath pro-
“ mised it. Oh ! how ought we to be longing
“ to be with Christ ; which is infinitely better
“ than any thing we can propose here ! To be
“ there, where all complaints shall be for ever
“ banished ; where no mountains shall separate
“ between

“ between God and our souls. And I hope it will
“ be some addition to our happiness, that you
“ and I shall be separated no more ; but that, as
“ we have joined in singing the praises of our
“ glorious Redeemer here, we shall sing them
“ in a much higher strain through an endless
“ eternity.”

Speaking of one of his children, who, he had heard, made a commendable progress in learning, he expressed his satisfaction in it, and added ;
——“ But how much greater joy would it give
“ me, to hear that he was greatly advanced in
“ the school of Christ ! Oh ! that our children
“ may be wise to salvation ; and may grow in
“ grace, as they do in stature !”

On another occasion he writes thus :—“ What
“ would I have given this day, upon the road,
“ for paper, pen, and ink, when the Spirit of the
“ Most High rested upon me ! Oh ! for the pen
“ of a ready writer, and the tongue of an angel,
“ to declare what God hath done this day for
“ my soul ! But, in short, it is in vain to attempt
“ it: all that I am able to say, is only this, that
“ my soul has been for some hours joining
“ with the blessed spirits above, in giving glory
“ and honour, and praise, unto him that sitteth
“ upon

“ upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever
“ and ever.”

Such were the elevations of his mind: yet there are many who will be inclined to censure them, as the flights of enthusiasm.—But when we consider the scriptural phrases,——“ of walking with God; of having communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; of Christ’s coming to them that open the door of their hearts to him, and supping with them; of God’s shedding abroad his love in the heart by his Spirit; of his coming with Jesus Christ, and making his abode with any one that loves him; of making us glad by the light of his countenance,”——and a variety of other equivalent expressions, we shall see reason to judge very favourably of the sentiments contained in these letters.

If habitual love to God; firm faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; a steady dependance on the divine promises; a full persuasion of the wisdom and goodness of all the dispensations of Providence; a high esteem for the blessings of the heavenly world; and a sincere contempt for the vanities of this, can properly be called enthusiasm, then was Colonel Gardiner indeed one of the greatest

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enthusiasts

enthusiasts our age has produced ; and in proportion to the degree in which he was so, he must be esteemed one of the wisest and happiest of mankind !

“ How often,” says the pious Grove, “ are
“ good thoughts suggested, heavenly affections
“ kindled and inflamed ! How often is the
“ Christian prompted to holy actions, drawn to
“ his duty, restored, quickened, persuaded, in such
“ a manner, that he would be unjust to the Spirit
“ of God, to question his agency in the whole !
“ Yes, O my soul ! there is a Supreme Being,
“ who governs the world, and is present with it ;
“ who takes up his more special habitation in
“ good men, and is nigh to all who call upon him,
“ to sanctify and assist them ! Hast thou not felt
“ him, O my soul ! like another soul, actu-
“ ating thy faculties, exalting thy views, purify-
“ ing thy passions, exciting thy graces, and be-
“ getting in thee an abhorrence of sin, and a
“ love of holiness ? And is not all this an ar-
“ gument of his presence, as truly as if thou
“ didst see him ?”

A LETTER

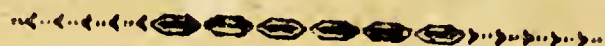
A LETTER FROM J. HERVEY, WHEN
ON A BED OF SICKNESS, TO A FRIEND.

“ My health is continually upon the decline, and the springs of life are all relaxing. My age is removed, and departed from me as a shepherd’s tent. Medicine is baffled; and my physician, Dr. Stonehouse, who is a dear friend to his patient, and a lover of the Lord Jesus, pities, but cannot succour me.

“ Now I apprehend myself near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view, perhaps my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments in this awful situation; at such a juncture the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

“ I have been too fond of reading every thing valuable and elegant that has been penned in our language, and been peculiarly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity; but were I to renew my studies, I would take leave of those accomplished trifles; I would resign the delights of modern wits, amusement and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scriptures

of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity at my Divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified."



Dr. ISAAC WATTS affords such an eminent example of the supporting and animating Power of Religion, under the pressure of great bodily affliction, that we trust the insertion of it will be acceptable to the reader.

We shall pass over the active period of his life, (in which he was distinguished by eminent piety and goodness, and an indefatigable labour for the welfare of his fellow-creatures) and attend him, when labouring under the distresses of a feeble frame, and a long-continued indisposition.

Of those seasons of affliction, he says, with a truly elevated mind and thankful heart, he was not afraid to let the world know, that——
“ amidst the sinkings of life and nature, Christi-
“ anity and the Gospel were his support! Amidst
“ all the violence of my distemper, and the tire-
“ some months of it, I thank God, I never lost
“ sight of reason or religion, though sometimes
“ I had

“ I had much ado to preserve the machine of
“ animal nature in such order, as regularly to
“ exercise either the Man or the Christian.”

The divine peace of conscience he enjoyed under these trying circumstances ; and the rational and Christian foundation of his hope and trust in the Divine Goodness, together with his humble appeal to God on these solemn occasions, are beautifully and justly expressed in his own devout soliloquy.

“ Yet, gracious God ! amidst these storms of nature,
“ Thine eyes behold a sweet and sacred calm
“ Reign thro’ the realms of conscience : all within
“ Lies peaceful, all composed. ’Tis wond’rous Grace
“ Keeps off thy terrors from this humble bosom ;
“ Tho’ stained with sins and follies, yet serene
“ In penitential peace and cheerful hope,
“ Sprinkled and guarded with atoning blood.
“ Thy vital smiles, amidst this desolation,
“ Like heav’nly sunbeams, hid behind the clouds,
“ Break out in happy moments, with bright radiance
“ Cleaving the gloom ; the fair celestial light
“ Softens and gilds the horrors of the storm,
“ And richest cordials to the heart conveys.

“ O glorious solace of immense distress,
“ A Conscience and a God ! This is my rock
“ Of firm support, my shield of sure defence

“ Against infernal arrows. Rise, my soul !
“ Put on thy courage : here’s the living spring
“ Of joys divinely sweet and ever new,
“ A peaceful conscience, and a smiling heaven.

“ My God, permit a creeping worm to say,
“ Thy Spirit knows I love thee. Worthless wretch,
“ To dare to love a God!—But Grace requires,
“ And Grace accepts. Thou seest my lab’ring soul.
“ Weak as my zeal is, yet my zeal is true ;
“ It bears the trying furnace. Love divine
“ Constrains me : I am thine. Incarnate Love
“ Has seiz’d, and holds me in almighty arms :
“ Here’s my salvation, my eternal hope,
“ Amidst the wreck of worlds and dying nature,
“ I am the Lord’s, and he for ever mine !”

The Power of Religion was very eminently seen in him, at these important seasons of languid and painful life. And after his recovery, what excellent effects does it still produce ! How was his heart enlarged with love to God ! and in what pathetick language does he pour out his Spirit !

“ Almighty Pow’r, I love thee ! blifsful name,
“ My healer God ! and may my inmost heart
“ Love and adore for ever ! O ’tis good
“ To wait submissive at thy holy throne,

“ To

“ To leave petitions at thy feet, and bear
“ Thy frowns and silence with a patient soul.
“ The hand of Mercy is not short to save,
“ Nor is the ear of heavenly Pity deaf
“ To mortal cries. IT notic’d all my groans,
“ And sighs, and long complaints, with wise delay,
“ Tho’ painful to the sufferer, and thy hand
“ In proper moment brought desired relief.”

And now, how amiable does he appear, when the shadows of the evening were stretching over him ! In his last sickness the active and sprightly powers of his nature failed him, that is, they were gradually doing so for two or three years before his decease ; yet his trust in God, through Jesus the Mediator, remained unshaken to the last. He was heard to say,——“ I bless God I
“ can lie down with comfort at night, not being
“ solicitous whether I awake in this world or
“ another.” And again, “ I should be glad to
“ read more, yet not in order to be more con-
“ firmed in the truth of the Christian Religion,
“ or in the truth of its promises ; for I believe
“ them enough to venture an eternity on them.”

When he was almost worn out, and broken down by his infirmities, he observed, in conversation with a friend, that——“ he remembered

“an aged minister used to say, that the most
“learned and knowing Christians, when they
“come to die, have only the same plain promises
“of the Gospel for their support, as the common
“and unlearned : and so,” said he, I find it. It
“is the plain promises of the Gospel that are my
“support ; and I bless God, they are plain pro-
“mises, that do not require much labour and
“pains to understand them.”

At times, when he found his spirit tending to
impatience, and ready to complain that he could
only lead a mere animal life, he would check
himself thus :——“The business of a Christian
“is to bear the will of God, as well as to do it.
“If I were in health, I could be doing that, and
“that I may do now. The best thing in obedience
“is a regard to the will of God, and the way to
“that is to get our inclinations and aversions as
“much mortified as we can.”

With such a calm and peaceful mind, with such
a blessed and lively hope, did this resigned ser-
vant of Christ wait for his Master's summons.
The springs of life were unbending by degrees,
till at length the earthly tabernacle fell quite to
decay, and was put off by the immortal spirit,
in the 75th year of his age.

THE

THE following interesting examples of the Power of Religion, on the Minds of persons in humble life, are extracted from the—"Letters
" of JOHN NEWTON, to an English Nobleman."

" Though the grand evidence of those truths upon which our hopes are built, arises from the authority of God speaking them in his word, and revealing them by his Spirit to the awakened heart, (for till the heart is awakened it is incapable of receiving this evidence;) yet some of these truths are so mysterious, so utterly repugnant to the judgment of depraved nature, that through the remaining influence of unbelief and vain reasoning, the temptations of Satan, and the subtle arguments with which some men, reputed wise, attack the foundations of our faith, the minds even of believers are sometimes capable of being shaken. I know no better corroborating evidence for the relief of the mind under such assaults, than the testimony of dying persons, especially of such as have lived out of the noise of controversy, and who, perhaps, never heard a syllable of what has been started in these evil days, against some of the important articles of the Christian Faith.

“ Permit me, my Lord, to relate, upon this occasion, some things which exceedingly struck me in the conversation I had with a young woman whom I visited in her last illness about two years ago. She was a sober, prudent person, of plain sense, could read the Bible, but had read little besides ; her knowledge of the world was nearly confined to the parish ; for I suppose she was seldom, if ever, twelve miles from home in her life. She had known the Gospel about seven years before the Lord visited her with a lingering consumption, which at length removed her to a better world. A few days before her death, in prayer at her bed-side, I thanked the Lord, that he gave her now to see that she had not followed cunningly devised fables. When I had finished, she repeated that expression ;——“ No,” said she, “ not cunningly devised fables ; these are realities indeed ; I feel their truth ; I feel their comfort. O tell my friends, tell my acquaintance, tell inquiring souls, tell poor sinners, tell all the daughters of Jerusalem, (alluding to Solomon’s song) what Jesus has done for my soul ! Tell them, that now, in the time of need, I find him my beloved, and my friend ! and as such I commend him to them.”

“ She

“ She then fixed her eyes steadfastly upon me, and proceeded as well as I can recollect, as follows :——“ Sir, you are highly favoured in being called to preach the Gospel. I have often heard you with pleasure ; but give me leave to tell you, that I now see all you have said, or can say, is comparatively but little. Nor till you come into my situation, and have death and eternity full in your view, will it be possible for you to conceive the vast weight and importance of the truths you declare. Oh ! Sir, it is a serious thing to die ; no words can express what is needful to support the soul in the solemnity of a dying hour.”

“ When I visited her again, she said,—“ I feel that my hope is fixed upon the Rock of Ages ; I know in whom I have believed. But the approach of death presents a prospect, which is, till then, hidden from us, and which cannot be described.”——She said much more to the same purpose ; and in all she spoke there were dignity, weight, and evidence. We may well say with Elihu,—“ who teacheth like him ?”

“ Many instances of the like kind I have met with here. I have a poor girl near me, whose natural capacity is very small ; but the Lord has been

been pleased to make her acquainted alternately with great temptations, and proportionably great discoveries of his love and truth ; sometimes, when her heart is enlarged, I listen to her with astonishment. I think no books or ministers I ever met with, have given me such an impression and understanding of what the Apostle styles—“ the deep things of God,”—as I have, upon some occasions, received from her conversation.

“ We have lost another of the people here. A mother in our Israel. A person of much experience, eminent grace, wisdom, and usefulness. She walked with God forty years. She was one of the Lord’s poor ; but her poverty was decent, sanctified, and honourable. She lived respected, and her death is considered as a publick loss. It is a great loss to me ; I shall miss her advice and example, by which I have been often edified and animated. Almost her last words were,—“ The Lord is my portion, faith my soul.”

“ My attendance upon the sick is not always equally comfortable ; but could I learn aright, it might be equally instructive. Some confirm the preciousness of a Saviour to me, by the cheerfulness with which, through faith in his name, they meet the King of Terrors. Others,

no less confirm it, by the terror and reluctance they discover, when they find they must die. For though there are too many who sadly flight the blessed Gospel, while they are in health, yet, in this place, most are too far enlightened to be quite thoughtless about their souls, if they retain their senses in their last illness. Then, like the foolish virgins, they say,—“Give us of your oil.”

“Through the Lord’s goodness, several whom I have visited in these circumstances, have afforded good hope. I have seen a marvellous and blessed change take place, in their language, views, and temper, in a few days. I now visit a young person, who is cut short in her 19th year by a consumption, and I think cannot live many days. I found her very ignorant and insensible, and she remained so a good while; but of late I hope her heart is touched. She feels her lost state; she seems to have some right desires; and I cannot but hope the Lord is teaching her, and will reveal himself to her before she departs.

“But the scene is sometimes different. I saw a young woman die last week: I had been often with her; but the night she was removed, she could only say,—“O I cannot live! I cannot
“live!”

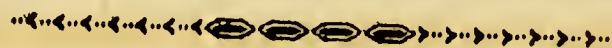
“live!”—She repeated this mournful complaint as long as she could speak; for as the vital powers were more oppressed, her voice was changed into groans; her groans grew fainter and fainter; and in about a quarter of an hour after she had done speaking, she expired. Poor thing, I thought as I stood by her bed-side, if you were a duchess, in this situation, what could the world do for you now! I thought likewise, how many things are there that now give us pleasure or pain, and assume a mighty importance in our view, which, in a dying hour, will be no more to us, than the clouds which fly unnoticed over our heads. Then the truth of our Lord’s declaration will be seen, felt, and acknowledged,—“One thing is needful.”—And we shall be ready to apply Grotius’s dying confession to, alas! a great part of our lives:—“Ah! I have consumed my life, in laboriously doing nothing.”

How greatly doth it exalt the mercy and goodness of the universal Parent of mankind, to perceive that his regard is equally towards his children and people, whatever may be their stations and conditions in the world! Verily, to the poor and illiterate, as well as to the rich and learned, the Gospel is preached; and those of every class who

who become truly humble and poor in spirit, and those only, will cordially receive and rejoice in it. Learning and knowledge are, indeed, ornaments and improvements of our nature; and, as well as riches, station, and influence, enable us to enlarge the sphere of our utility and beneficence: but it is not hence to be inferred, either that these qualifications are not attended with peculiar dangers, temptations, and inquietudes, or that the Father of Spirits, who is just and equal in all his ways, regards their possessors with distinguished marks of his favour. The wisdom of Providence, to promote order and government in the earth, hath, indeed, ordained a diversity of talents and conditions amongst men; but he has also graciously declared, that to the religious and faithful improvement, of even the fewest talents, shall be annexed the highest reward that can be conferred upon us; namely, that of——“ Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

——A humble and teachable disposition, a pious, upright, and benevolent temper of mind, are incomparably of greater worth, than all the accomplishments and possessions of the world; and they are the only attainments which, in all degrees

degrees of knowledge, and in every station and condition of life, will procure the Divine Favour, and advance us to real honour and happiness.



THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF AN AFFECTING, MOURNFUL EXIT, IS RELATED BY DR. YOUNG, WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE MELANCHOLY SCENE.

“The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, whose last hours suggested these thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said,——“ You and the physician are
“ come too late.—I have neither life nor hope.
“ You both aim at miracles. You would raise
“ the dead !”

“Heaven,” I said, “was merciful”—“Or,” exclaimed he, —“I could not have been thus
“ guilty. What has it not done to bless, and to
“ save me ? I have been too strong for omnipotence ! I have plucked down ruin.”——I said, the blessed Redeemer, —“Hold ! hold ! you
“ wound me !—That is the rock on which I split
“ —I denied his name !”

“Refusing

“ Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the phyfician, he lay filent, as far as fudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock ftruck : Then with vehemence ;——“ Oh !
“ time ! time ! It is fit thou fhouldft thus ftrike
“ thy murderer to the heart !—How art thou fled
“ for ever !—A month !—Oh, for a fingle week !
“ I afk not for years ; though an age were too
“ little for the much I have to do.”

“ On my faying, we could not do too much :
that heaven was a bleffed place—

“ So much the worfe. ’Tis loft ! ’tis loft !—
“ Heaven is to me the fevereft part of hell !”

“ Soon after I propofed prayer. “ Pray you
“ that can. I never prayed. I cannot pray :—
“ Nor need I. Is not Heaven on my fide al-
“ ready ? It closes with my confcience. Its fe-
“ vereft ftrokes but fecond my own.”

“ His friend being much touched, even to tears,
at this (who could forbear ? I could not), with a
moft affectionate look, he faid ;——“ Keep thofe
“ tears for thyfelf. I have undone thee.—Dofte
“ weep for me ? that’s cruel. What can pain
“ me more ?”

“ Here his friend, too much affected, would
have left him.——“ No, ftay ; thou ftill may’ft
“ hope ;—

“ hope;—therefore hear me. How madly have
“ I talk’d ! How madly hast thou listened, and
“ believed ! but look on my present state, as a
“ full answer to thee, and to myself. This body
“ is all weakness and pain ; but my soul, as if
“ stung up by torment to greater strength and
“ spirit, is full powerful to reason ; full mighty
“ to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs
“ within the jaws of immortality, is, doubtless,
“ immortal—And, as for a Deity, nothing less
“ than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.”

“ I was about to congratulate this passive, invol-
luntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime
articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of na-
ture ; when he thus, very passionately :—“ No,
“ no ! let me speak on. I have not long to speak.
“ —My much injured friend ! my soul, as my
“ body, lies in ruins ; in scattered fragments of
“ broken thought—Remorse for the past, throws
“ my thought on the future. Worse dread of
“ the future, strikes it back on the past. I turn,
“ and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel
“ half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst
“ struggle with the martyr for his stake ; and
“ bless heaven for the flames !—that is not an
“ everlasting

“everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable
“fire.”

“How were we struck! yet soon after, still
more. With what an eye of distraction, what
a face of despair! he cried out:——“My prin-
“ciples have poisoned my friend; my extrava-
“gance has beggared my boy; my unkindness
“has murdered my wife!—And is there ano-
“ther hell?—Oh! Thou blasphemed, yet indul-
“gent, LORD GOD! Hell itself is a refuge,
“if it hide me from thy frown!”

“Soon after, his understanding failed. His ter-
rified imagination uttered horrors not to be re-
peated, or ever forgotten. And ere the sun (which
I hope has seen few like him) arose, the gay,
young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most
wretched Altamont expired!

“If this is a man of pleasure, what is a man of
pain? How quick, how total, is their transit! In
what a dismal gloom they set for ever! How
short, alas! the day of their rejoicing!—For a
moment they glitter—they dazzle. In a mo-
ment, where are they? Oblivion covers their
memories. Ah! would it did! Infamy snatches
them from oblivion. In the long-living annals
of infamy their triumphs are recorded. Thy
sufferings

sufferings still bleed in the bosom (poor Altamont!) of the heart-stricken friend: for Altamont had a friend. He might have had many. His transient morning might have been the dawn of an immortal day. His name might have been gloriously enrolled in the records of eternity. His memory might have left a sweet fragrance behind it, grateful to the surviving friend, salutary to the succeeding generation. With what capacities was he endowed! with what advantages, for being greatly good! But with the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool. If he judges amiss in the supreme point, judging right in all else, but aggravates his folly; as it shews him wrong, though blessed with the best capacity of being right."



The late SOAME JENNINGS, Esq. Member of Parliament for Cambridge, is well known to have been a man of talents, virtue, and learning.

The sentiments of this distinguished person, on the purity and excellence of the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, contain such a strong testimony to the power and efficacy of true Religion;

ligion; and appear to have been formed so much under its influence, that we shall close these Memoirs with a few extracts from them.

“ Let us examine, says he, what are the new precepts in the Christian Religion, which peculiarly correspond with its object, the preparing us for the kingdom of heaven. Of these, the chief are, poorness of spirit, forgiveness of injuries, and charity to all men: to these we may add repentance, faith, self-abasement, and a detachment from the world; all moral duties peculiar to this Religion, and absolutely necessary to the attainment of its end.

“ Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is “ the kingdom of heaven.”——By which poorness of spirit, is to be understood a disposition of mind, meek, humble, submissive to power, void of ambition, patient of injuries, and free from all resentment. This was so new, and so opposite to the ideas of all Pagan moralists, that they thought this temper of mind a criminal and contemptible meanness, which must induce men to sacrifice the glory of their country, and their own honour to a shameful pusillanimity; and such it appears to almost all who are called Christians, even at this day, who not only reject it in practice,

tice, but disavow it in principle, notwithstanding this explicit declaration of their master. We see them revenging the smallest affronts by premeditated murder, as individuals, on principles of honour; and in their national capacities, destroying each other with fire and sword, for the low considerations of commercial interests, the balance of rival powers, or the ambition of Princes; we see them, with their last breath, animating each other to a savage revenge; and in the agonies of death, plunging, with feeble arms, their daggers into the hearts of their opponents: and, what is still worse, we hear all these barbarisms celebrated by Historians; flattered by Poets; applauded in Theatres; approved in Senates; and even sanctified in Pulpits! But universal practice cannot alter the nature of things, nor universal error change the nature of truth. Pride was not made for man, but humility, meekness, and resignation; that is, poorness of spirit was made for man, and properly belongs to his dependent and precarious situation; and is the only disposition of mind, which can enable him to enjoy ease and quiet here and happiness hereafter. Yet was this important precept entirely unknown, until it was promulgated by him,

him, who said,——“ Suffer little children to
“ come unto me, and forbid them not ; for of
“ such is the kingdom of heaven : verily I say
“ unto you, whoever shall not receive the king-
“ dom of God as a little child, he shall not enter
“ therein.”

“ Another precept, equally and no less excel-
lent, is forgiveness of injuries.——“ Ye have
“ heard,” says Christ to his disciples,——“ Thou
“ shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine ene-
“ my : but I say unto you, love your enemies ;
“ bless them that curse you ; do good to them
“ that hate you ; and pray for them which
“ despitefully use you, and persecute you.”——

This was a lesson so new, and so utterly un-
known, until taught by his doctrines, and en-
forced by his example, that the wisest moralists
of the wisest nations and ages, represented the
desire of revenge as a mark of a noble mind,
and the accomplishment of it as one of the
chief felicities attendant on a fortunate man.

“ But how much more magnanimous, how
much more beneficial to mankind is forgiveness !
It is more magnanimous, because every generous
and exalted disposition of the human mind is
requisite to the practice of it ; for these alone can
enable

enable us to bear the wrongs and insults of wickedness and folly, with patience, and to look down on the perpetrators of them, with pity, rather than indignation; these alone can teach us, that such are but a part of those sufferings allotted to us in this state of probation; and to know, that to overcome evil with good, is the most glorious of all victories. It is the most beneficial, because this amiable conduct alone can put an end to a continual succession of injuries and retaliations; for every retaliation becomes a new injury, and requires another act of revenge for satisfaction. But would we observe this salutary precept, to love our enemies, and to do good to those who despitefully use us, this obstinate benevolence would at last conquer the most inveterate hearts, and we should have no enemies to forgive. How much more exalted a character therefore is a Christian Martyr, suffering with resignation, and praying for the guilty, than that of a Pagan Hero, breathing revenge, and destroying the innocent! Yet, noble and useful as this virtue is, before the appearance of this Religion, it was not only unpractised, but decried in principle, as mean and ignominious, though so obvious a remedy for most of the miseries of
this

this life, and so necessary a qualification for the happiness of another.

“ Repentance is another new moral duty strenuously insisted on by this Religion. But no repentance can remove our depravity, but such as entirely changes the nature and disposition of the offender; which in the language of Scripture is called—“ Being born again.”

“ Mere contrition for past crimes, nor even the pardon of them, cannot effect this, unless it operate to this entire conversion or new birth, as it is properly and emphatically named; for sorrow can no more purify a mind corrupted by a long continuance in vicious habits, than it can restore health to a body distempered by a long course of vice and intemperance. Hence also, every one who is in the least acquainted with himself, may judge of the reasonableness of the hope that is in him, and of his situation in a future state, by that of his present.

“ If he feels in himself a temper, proud, turbulent, vindictive, and malevolent, and a violent attachment to the pleasures or business of the world, he may be assured, that he must be excluded from the kingdom of heaven; not only because his conduct can attract no such reward;

H

but

but because, if admitted, he would find there no objects satisfactory to his passions, inclinations, and pursuits.

“ Faith is another moral duty enjoined by this institution, and to be found in the New Testament : where, in general, it signifies an humble, teachable and candid disposition, a trust in God, and confidence in his promises ; and it is always a direct contrast to pride, obstinacy, and self-conceit.

“ Self-abasement is another moral duty inculcated by this Religion only ; which requires us to impute even our own virtues, to the grace, and favour of our Creator ; and to acknowledge, that we can do nothing good by our own powers, unless assisted by his over-ruling influence. This doctrine seems, at first sight, to infringe on our free-will, and to deprive us of all merit ; but, on a closer examination, the truth of it may be demonstrated both by reason and experience, and that in fact it does not impair the one, or depreciate the other ; and that it is productive of so much humility, resignation, and dependance on God, that it justly claims a place amongst the most illustrious moral virtues.

“ Detachment

“ Detachment from the world is another moral virtue, constituted by this Religion alone ; so new, that, even at this day, few of its professors can be persuaded, that it is required, or that it is any virtue at all. By this detachment from the world, is not to be understood a seclusion from society, abstraction from all business, or retirement to a gloomy cloister. Industry and labour, cheerfulness and hospitality, are frequently recommended ; nor is the acquisition of wealth and honours prohibited, if they can be obtained by honest means, and a moderate degree of attention and care : but such an unremitted anxiety, and perpetual application, as engrosses our whole time and thoughts, are forbid, because they are incompatible with the spirit of this Religion, and must utterly disqualify us for the attainment of its great end. We toil on in the vain pursuits and frivolous occupations of the world, die in our harness, and then expect, if no gigantic crime stand in the way, to step immediately into the kingdom of heaven : but without a previous detachment from the business of this world, we cannot be prepared for the happiness of another.

“ Yet this could make no part of the morality of Pagans, because their virtues were altogether

connected with this business, and consisted chiefly in conducting it with honour to themselves, and benefit to the publick: but Christianity has a nobler object in view, which if not attended to, must be lost for ever. This object is that celestial mansion, of which we should never lose sight, and to which we should be ever advancing during our journey through life: but this by no means precludes us from performing the business, or enjoying the amusements of travellers, provided they detain us not too long, nor lead us out of our way.

“ Another precept, first noticed and first enjoined by this institution, is charity to all men. What this is, we may best learn from the admirable description, painted in the following words: —“ Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself; “ is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things.” — Here we have an accurate delineation of this bright constellation of all virtues, which consists not, as
many

many imagine, in the building of monasteries, endowment of hospitals, or the distribution of alms; but in such an amiable disposition of mind, as exercises itself every hour in acts of kindness, patience, complacency, and benevolence to all around us; and which alone is able to promote happiness in the present life, or render us capable of receiving it in another. And yet this is totally new, and so it is declared to be by the Author of it;—"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye love one another; by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—This benevolent disposition is made the great characteristic of a Christian, the test of his obedience, and the mark by which he is to be distinguished.

"This love for each other, is that charity just now described, and contains all those qualities, which are there attributed to it; humility, patience, meekness, and beneficence: without which we must live in perpetual discord, and consequently cannot pay obedience to this commandment, by loving one another: a commandment so sublime, so rational, and so beneficial, so wisely calculated to correct the depravity, diminish the wickedness, and abate the miseries of

human nature, that, did we universally comply with it, we should soon be relieved from all the inquietudes arising from our own unruly passions, anger, envy, revenge, malice, and ambition; as well as from all those injuries, to which we are perpetually exposed from the indulgence of the same passions in others. It would also preserve our minds in such a state of tranquillity, and so prepare them for the kingdom of heaven, that we should slide out of a life of peace, love, and benevolence, into that celestial society, by an almost imperceptible transition."



CONCLUSION.

CONCLUSION.

THE Reader has been presented, in the preceding collection, with the testimonies and experience of a number of his fellow-creatures, of different periods, countries, professions, and situations in life; all uniting in their attestation to the Power and excellence of true Religion, as our surest guide and consolation through time, and the only means of securing eternal happiness. This solemn and concurrent testimony is of great weight, as it proceeds from some of the most eminent persons that have ever appeared in the world, whether we consider their station, their abilities, or their virtue. The wisdom and experience of such characters, addressing us on a subject of the most interesting nature, is certainly an object of great moment, and one that claims our serious and reverent attention.

Some of them seem not to have been deeply impressed with religious considerations, until near the termination of their days; and they have

then had to lament the misapplication of their time, and the postponing the great end for which they had a Being.—Others appear to have made an early, or more seasonable, choice of virtue and goodness for their portion; and to have spent a great part of life in the fear and love of God, and in doing good to mankind: they have enjoyed that peace of mind, which the world could neither ⁽ⁱⁿ⁾ give nor take away: and a cheering well-grounded hope has accompanied them to the closing scene, that there was reserved for them a crown of immortal honour.—What an evidence on behalf of piety and virtue!—What a dissuasive from vice and folly!—And how animating to weary travellers, to persevere in the paths of goodness, and to keep their eyes fixed on that happy country, where they too shall rest for ever from all their labours!

But we live in a world of danger and temptation. Propensities to evil are powerful; and the riches, honours, and pleasures of life, are continually alluring us to an immoderate love and pursuit of them: and as the subtle enemy of all good, is perpetually on the watch to avail himself of our weakness and exposure, and to ensnare and destroy us, our safety consists in being always
upon

upon our guard, and in steadfastly resisting every approach of evil.

But who is sufficient for these things?—In this situation, how shall we preserve our innocence, maintain the warfare, and finally become victorious?—There is no surer truth, than that this power is not of ourselves; but that it proceeds from the grace of God, unto whom we are directed to apply daily, for preservation in temptation, and deliverance from evil.—The perusal of valuable books, reflection, converse, and other means of moral and intellectual improvement, are indeed of great use and importance. Besides enlarging the mind, and promoting our temporal comfort and advantage, they may be the means of spreading before us a pleasing view of the beauty and excellence of Religion; and may occasion some desires for the possession of that happiness which it confers: but unless the Divine AID be sought for and superadded, they will be defective in principle, and will not be able to produce that strength of resolution, and steady perseverance, which are necessary to crown our labours with success. Interest, passion, depraved inclination, and the love of the world, in con-

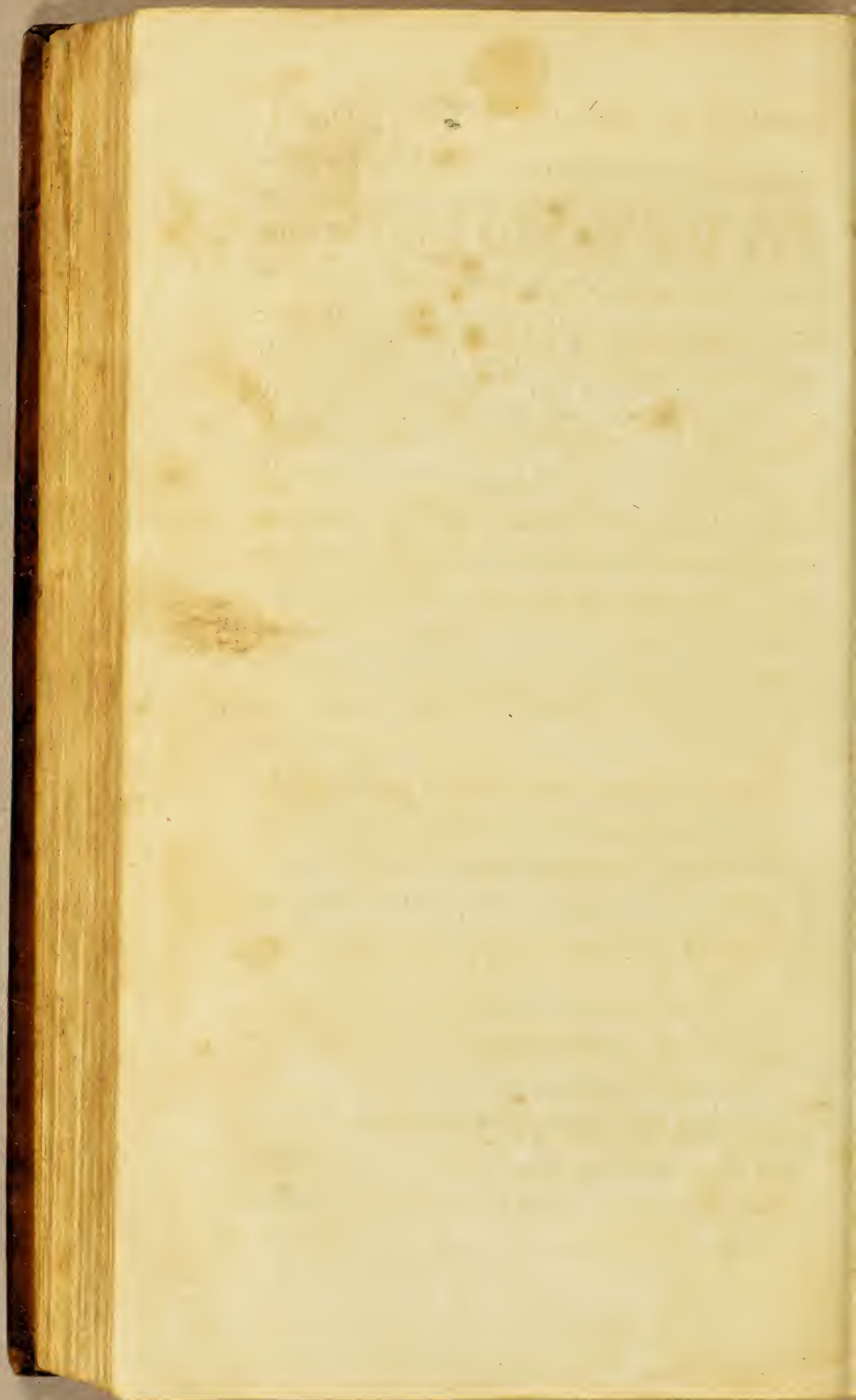
stant operation, are too powerful to be controlled, by slight and temporary convictions of mind, or feeble and transient wishes of the heart.

May we, therefore, never rest satisfied with even clear apprehensions of our duty, just sentiments of the amiableness and excellence of Religion, and frequent desires to be its disciples, and partake of its felicity; nor be content with cultivating the most refined and regular ideas on these subjects:—but may it be our most weighty and steadfast concern, in the use of all the means of improvement, to look up, through the Redeemer of the world, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for the gracious assistance of his Holy Spirit, in the great work of our salvation; as that alone which can bring into operation our sentiments and desires, sanctify and render effectual our endeavours to please him, and produce in us the highest perfection of our nature.

He that formed our spirits, who is constantly present with us, and without whose superintendence not a sparrow falls to the ground, knows all our wants and frailties; and is not only able, but abundantly disposed, to grant all that we request, according to his will, for our supply and support.

support.—“ Ask, and it shall be given you ;
“ seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be
“ opened unto you.”——Let us not, therefore,
be dismayed with the perils of our situation, and
the feebleness of our powers ; but with pre-
pared hearts, and in humble confidence, apply
to the Father of Light and Goodness, for his
protection and assistance, to conduct us safely
through the present life, and to qualify us for
a happy immortality.

APPENDIX:



APPENDIX:

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE

PLAGUE IN LONDON;

AND

SOME EXTRACTS

FROM THE WRITINGS OF

PIOUS AND EMINENT MEN,

AGAINST THE

ENTERTAINMENTS OF THE STAGE,

AND OTHER

VAIN AMUSEMENTS.



A SHORT ACCOUNT OF
THE PLAGUE,

Which prevailed in

The City of LONDON, in the Year 1665 ;

EXTRACTED FROM THE MEMOIRS OF A PERSON
WHO RESIDED THERE, DURING THE WHOLE
TIME OF THE INFECTION.



AMONGST the many calamities with which the Almighty is pleased to visit the children of men, in order to reduce them to a just sense of their weakness, and to an entire dependence upon him, there are scarcely any that are more productive of true penitent humiliation, and a sight of what is really good, and truly evil, than those contagious distempers which an offended God, sometimes, suffers to rage amongst the people. In the year 1665, the City of London was sorely visited by the Plague: an account of the progress and effects of that visitation, was
kept

kept by a citizen who remained there during the whole time of the sickness, and who appears to have been candid and judicious in his remarks. It is hoped the reader will, in a short description of that memorable judgment, meet with some lessons of best wisdom, and derive instruction from this close and serious converse with death and the grave.

“The introduction of this contagion in London, was by some goods imported from Holland, which had been brought thither from the Levant. It first broke out in the house where those goods were opened, from whence it spread to others. In the first house that was infected, there died four persons: a neighbour who went to visit them, on returning home, gave the distemper to her family, and died with all her household. The disorder spread, and the Parish Officers, who were employed about the sick persons, being also infected, the physicians perceived the danger, and, upon narrow inspection, were assured that it was indeed the Plague, with all its terrifying particulars, and that it threatened a general infection. The people began now to be alarmed all over the town; the number of burials, within the bills of mortality, for a week, was generally
about

about 240 to 300 ; but from the 24th to the 27th of January, the printed bill was 474. However, the frost continuing very severe till near the end of February, the bills decreased, and people began to look upon the danger as over ; but in May, the bills greatly increased, and the weather becoming hot, the infection spread again in a dreadful manner.

“ I lived, says the Author, without Aldgate, and as the distemper had not reached to that side of the city, our neighbourhood continued easy ; but at the other end of the town, the consternation was very great ; and the nobility and gentry, with their families, thronged out of the town in an unusual manner. Nothing was to be seen but waggons, carts, and coaches, with goods and people, and horse-men attending them, hurrying away ; then empty waggons and carts appeared, which were apparently returning to fetch more people : besides innumerable crowds of people on horseback, fitted out for travelling. This was a very melancholy prospect ; indeed there was nothing else of moment to be seen ; it filled my mind with very serious thoughts of the misery that was coming upon the city, and the unhappy condition of those who would be left
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in it. By the end of July, the contagion had spread and increased to a great degree: sorrow and sadness sat upon every face; and though some parts were not yet overwhelmed, all looked deeply concerned. London might well be said to be all in tears. The mourners did not go about the streets, for nobody made a formal dress of mourning for their nearest relations; but the voice of mourning was, indeed, heard in the streets: the shrieks of women and children at the windows and doors of their houses, where their dearest relations were dying, were so frequently heard, as we passed, that it was enough to pierce the stoutest heart. Tears and lamentations were perceived in almost every house, especially in the first part of the visitation; for, towards the latter end, people did not so much concern themselves for the loss of their friends, expecting that themselves would be summoned the next hour.

“ It was a time of very unhappy breaches amongst us, in matters of Religion: divisions, and separate opinions prevailed; the Church of England had been lately restored, and the Presbyterians and other professors had set up their meetings for worship, and apart, in which they were frequently disturbed, the government endeavouring

deavouring to suppress them. But this dreadful visitation reconciled the different parties, and took away all manner of prejudice and scruple from the people. Yet after the sickness was over, that spirit of charity subsided, and things returned to their old channel.—Here we may observe, that a nearer view of death would soon reconcile men of good principles to one another ; and that it is chiefly owing to our easy situations in life, and our putting these things far from us, that our breaches are fomented, and that there is so much prejudice and want of Christian charity and union amongst us. A close view and converse with death, or with diseases that threaten death, would scum off the gall of our tempers, remove our animosities, and bring us to see with different eyes. On the other side of the grave, we shall all be brethren again.

“ The inns of court were now all shut up ; there were but few lawyers to be seen in the city ; indeed there was no need of them, for quarrels and divisions about interest had ceased ; every body was at peace.

“ It was also worthy of observation, as well as fruitful of instruction, to remark with what alacrity the people, of all persuasions, embraced the opportunities

opportunities they had of attending upon the publick worship, and other appointed times of devotion, as humiliations, fastings, and publick confession of sins, to implore the mercy of God, and avert the judgment which hung over their heads. The churches were so thronged, that there was, often, no coming near; no, not to the very door of the largest churches. There were also daily prayers appointed, morning and evening, at which the people attended with uncommon devotion.

“ All plays and interludes, which had lately begun to increase amongst us, were prohibited; the gaming-tables, publick dancing-rooms, and musick-houses, which had multiplied, and begun to debauch the manners of the people, were shut up and suppressed, finding no trade; for the minds of the people were generally humbled and agitated with other things: Death was before their eyes, and every body began to think of their graves.

“ The infection still gradually increased until the middle of August, when there died a thousand a-day, by the account of the weekly bills, though they never gave a full account, by many thousands: many of the parish-officers were taken sick themselves, and died when their account

count was to be given in. The parish of Stepney alone, had, within the year, one hundred and sixteen sextons, grave-diggers, carriers of the dead, &c. Indeed the work was not of a nature to allow them leisure to take an exact tale of the dead bodies, which were all thrown together in the dark in a pit, to which no man could come near without the utmost peril.

“ I had (says the Author) the care of my brother's house, which obliged me sometimes to go abroad. In these walks, I had dismal scenes before my eyes, particularly of persons falling dead in the streets, and heard terrible shrieks of women, who, in their agonies, would throw open their chamber-windows, and cry out in a sad and affecting manner. It is impossible to describe the variety of postures in which the passions of the poor people would express themselves.— Passing through Token-House Yard, of a sudden a casement violently opened just over my head, and a woman gave three frightful shrieks, and then cried, —“ Oh ! Death, death, death !”— which struck me with horror, and caused a chillness in my very blood. There was no body to be seen in the whole street, neither did any window open, for people had no curiosity, now, in any case.

case. I went on to pass into Bell Alley, where there was a still greater cry: I could hear women and children run screaming about the rooms like distracted persons. It is scarcely credible, what dreadful cases happened in particular families every day: people in the rage of the distemper, or in the torment of the swelling, which was indeed intolerable, becoming raving and distracted, oftentimes laid violent hands upon themselves, or threw themselves out of the windows! or breaking out of the houses, would dance naked about the streets, not knowing one ecstasy from another: others, if not prevented, would run directly down to the river, and plunge into the water. Some died of mere grief, and some of fright and surprise, without having received the infection. It often pierced my very soul, to hear the groans and cries of those who were thus tormented. But the symptom of swelling was accounted the most promising particular, in the whole infection; for if these swellings could be brought to break and run, the patient generally recovered: whereas, those who were struck with death at the beginning of the distemper, and had spots come upon them, often went about tolerably easy, until a little before they died, and some
until

until the moment they dropped down ; such would be taken suddenly very sick, and would run to some convenient place, or to their own houses if possible, and there sit down, grow faint, and die.

“The method the magistrates fell into, of locking up the doors of people’s houses, where any had taken the distemper, and setting watchmen there night and day, to prevent any going out to spread the infection, looked hard and cruel, as, perhaps, those who were found in the family, might have escaped, if they had been removed from the sick : but the publick good seemed to justify such a conduct, and there was no obtaining the least mitigation by any application to the magistrates. This put people, who thought themselves well, upon many stratagems to get out of their confinement. Going out one morning, I heard a great outcry, which prompting my curiosity, I inquired the cause of a person who looked out of a window. A watchman had been employed to watch at the door of a house which was infected and shut up ; both himself and the day watchman, attended there a day and two nights. All this while no noise had been heard, nor lights seen in the house ; neither had they called for any thing. It seems that, two or three
days

days before, the dead-cart had stopped there, and a servant-maid had been brought down to the door dead, wrapped only in a rug, which the buriers had put into the cart and carried away. The next day, the watchman heard great crying and screaming in the house, which he supposed was occasioned by some of the family dying just at that time; upon which he knocked at the door a great while: at last one looked out, and said with an angry, quick tone, and the voice of one who was crying,—“What d’ye want?”—He answered,—“I am the Watchman: How do you do?”—The person replied,—“Stop the dead-cart.”—This was about one o’clock; soon after, he stopt the dead-cart, and then knocked again, but no body answered. He continued knocking, and the bell-man called several times—“Bring out your dead;”—but no body answered; and the man who drove the cart, being called to other houses, would stay no longer, and drove away. In the morning, when the day watchmen came in, they knocked at the door a great while; but no body answering, they got a ladder, and one of them went up to the window, and looking into the room, he saw a woman lying dead upon the floor, in a dismal situation:

situation: but though he called aloud, and knocked hard on the floor with his staff, no body stirred or answered. This they made known to the magistrate, who ordered the house to be broke open, when nobody was found in it, but that young woman; who having been infected, and past recovery, the rest had left her to die by herself, and were every one gone, having found some way to elude the watchman, and go out. As to those cries and shrieks, which he heard, it was supposed, they were the passionate cries of the family, at the bitter parting, which to be sure it was to them all; this being the sister to the mistress of the family.

“ Many more instances might be given; but these may suffice to shew the deep distress of that day. Death did not now hover over every one's head only, but looked into their houses and chambers, and even stared in their very faces; and tho' there were some stupidity and dullness of mind, yet there was a great deal of just alarm founded in the utmost soul; many consciences were awakened; many hard hearts melted; many a penitent confession was made of crimes long concealed. People might be heard, even in the streets, as we passed along, calling upon God for

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mercy,

mercy, through Jesus Christ; and saying,——
“*I have been a thief*”——“*I have been an adulterer*”
“——*I have been a murderer*”——and the like: and none durst stop to make enquiry into such things, or to administer comfort to the poor creatures, who, in the anguish both of soul and body, thus cried out. Many were the warnings that were then given by dying penitents, to others, not to put off and delay their repentance to a day of distress; that such a time of calamity as this, was not the best time for repentance. I wish (says the Author) I could repeat the very sound of those groans and exclamations, that I heard from some poor dying creatures, when in the height of their agonies and distress; and that I could make him who reads this, hear as I imagine I now hear them; for the sound seems still to ring in my ears.

“ In the beginning of September, the number of burials increasing, the Church-wardens of Aldgate Parish ordered a large pit to be dug, to hold all the dead which might die in a month: it was about forty feet long, and sixteen broad. Some blamed the Church-wardens for suffering such a frightful gulph to be dug; nevertheless, in two weeks, they had thrown more than eleven hundred bodies into it, when they were obliged
to

to fill it up, as the bodies were come within six feet of the surface. My curiosity drove me to go and see this pit, when there had been near four hundred people buried in it. I got admittance into the Church-yard by means of the Sexton, who was a sensible, religious man. He would have persuaded me not to go, saying, that——“ it was, indeed, their duty to venture, and in it, they might hope to be preserved ; but that as I had no apparent call, he thought my curiosity could not justify my running that *hazard*.”— I told him,—“ I had been pressed in my mind *to go* ; and that, perhaps, it might be an instructing sight.”—Nay, ” says the good man, “ if you will venture upon that score, in the name of GOD go in : it will be a sermon to you ; it may be the best that ever you heard in your life.”

—“ This discourse had shocked my resolution, and I stood wavering for a good while ; but just then I heard the bell-man, and the cart loaded with dead bodies appearing, I went in. There was no body that I could perceive at first, with the cart, but the buriers and the man who led the cart ; but when they came to the pit, they saw a man muffled in a cloak, who appeared in great agony. The buriers immediately gathered

about him, supposing he was one of those poor delirious or desperate creatures, who would sometimes run to the pit, wrapt in blankets, and throw themselves in; and, as they said, bury themselves. When the buriers came to him, they soon found he was neither desperate nor distempered in mind, but one oppressed with a dreadful weight of grief, having his wife and several children all in the cart that was just come in with him, and he following in agony and excess of sorrow. He calmly desired the buriers to let him alone, and said he would only see the bodies thrown in, and go away; so they left importuning him: but no sooner was the cart turned round, and the bodies shot into the pit promiscuously, which was a surprise to him, for he at least expected they would have been decently laid in, though indeed he was afterwards convinced that was impracticable; I say, no sooner did he see this, but he cried out aloud, unable to contain himself, and fell down in a swoon. The buriers ran to him, and took him up, and when he came to himself, led him to a place where he was taken care of. He looked into the pit again, as he went away, but the buriers had covered the bodies so immediately, by throwing
in

in earth, that nothing could be seen. The cart had in it sixteen or seventeen bodies. Some were wrapt up in linen sheets, some in rugs, some were little otherwise than naked, or so loosely clad, that what covering they had fell from them, in the shooting out of the cart, and they fell quite naked among the rest : but the matter was not much to them, or the indecency much to any one else, seeing they were to be huddled together into the common grave of mankind ; for here was no difference made, but poor and rich went together.

“ John Hayward, under-sexton, grave-digger, and bearer of the dead, never had the distemper at all, but lived about twenty years after it. His wife was employed to nurse the infected people ; yet she herself never was infected. The only preservative he used against the infection, was holding garlick and rue in his mouth, and smoking tobacco ; this account I had from himself. His wife’s precaution was washing her head in vinegar, and sprinkling her head-clothes so with it, as to keep them always moist ; and if the smell of any of those she waited on, was more than ordinarily offensive, she snuffed vinegar up her nose, sprinkled her head-clothes, and held an handkerchief wetted with it, to her mouth.

“ And here I must not omit mentioning the disposition of the people of that day, with respect to their charity to the poor, which indeed was very large, both in a publick and a private way. Some pious ladies were so zealous in this good work, and so confident in the protection of Providence, in the discharge of this great duty, that they went about distributing alms, and visiting the poor families who were infected, in their very houses, appointing nurses and apothecaries to supply them with what they wanted. Thus giving their blessings to the poor, in substantial relief, as well as hearty prayers for them. I will not undertake to say, that none of these charitable people were suffered to die of the Plague; but this I may say, that I never knew that any of them did miscarry in their pious work; which I mention for the encouragement of others, in cases of like distress. And doubtless, if they that——“ Give to the poor, lend “ to the Lord, and he will repay it; ”——those who hazard their lives to give to the poor, and to comfort and assist them in such a misery as this, may hope to be protected therein.

“ From the middle of August to the middle of September, the infection still increased, and
spread

spread itself with an irresistible power; and it was reckoned that, during that time, there died no less than sixteen hundred a-day, one day with another. It was then that the confusion and terror were inexpressible; the courage of the people appointed to carry away the dead, began to fail them: the vigilance of the magistrates was now put to the utmost trial. At last the violence of the distemper came to such a height, that the people sat still, looking at one another, and seemed quite abandoned to despair. In a word, people began to give themselves up to a fear that there was nothing to be expected, but an universal desolation. This despair made people bold and venturesome; they were no more shy of one another, as expecting there was now no avoiding the distemper, but that all must go: this brought them to crowd into the Churches; they no longer inquired what condition the people who sat near them were in, but came without the least caution, and crowded together, as if their lives were of no consequence, compared to the work which they were come about. Indeed, their zeal in coming, and the earnestness and affectionate attention they shewed to what they heard, made it manifest what value people would put upon

the worship of God, if they thought every day they attended at the Church might be their last.

“ It was in the height of this despair, that it pleased God to stay his hand, and to slacken the violence of the contagion, in a manner as surprising as that of its beginning; and which demonstrated it to be his own particular hand, above the mere agency of means. Nothing but Omnipotent Power could have done it: the contagion despised all medicine; death raged in every corner; and had it gone on as it did then, a few weeks more would have cleared the town of all its inhabitants. In that very moment, when thirty thousand were dead in three weeks, nay, when it was reported three thousand had died in one night, and an hundred thousand more were taken sick; when we might well say, —“ Vain was the help of man,”—it pleased God to cause the force of the distemper to abate, and by his immediate hand to disarm the enemy. It was wonderful! The physicians were surprised, where-ever they visited, to find their patients better, and in a few days every body was recovering. Nor was this by any medicine found out, or any new method of cure discovered; but it was evidently from the secret invifible hand
of

of HIM who had at first sent this disease, as a judgment upon us. Let the philosophers search for reasons in nature to account for it, and labour, as much as they will, to lessen the debt they owe to their Maker; even those physicians who had the least share of religion in them, were obliged to acknowledge that it was all supernatural. The streets were now full of poor recovering creatures, who appeared very sensible, and thankful to God for their unexpected deliverance: yet I must own, that as to the generality of the people, it might too justly be said of them, as was said of the children of Israel, after they had been delivered from the Host of Pharaoh;—"They sung his praise, but they soon forgot his works."

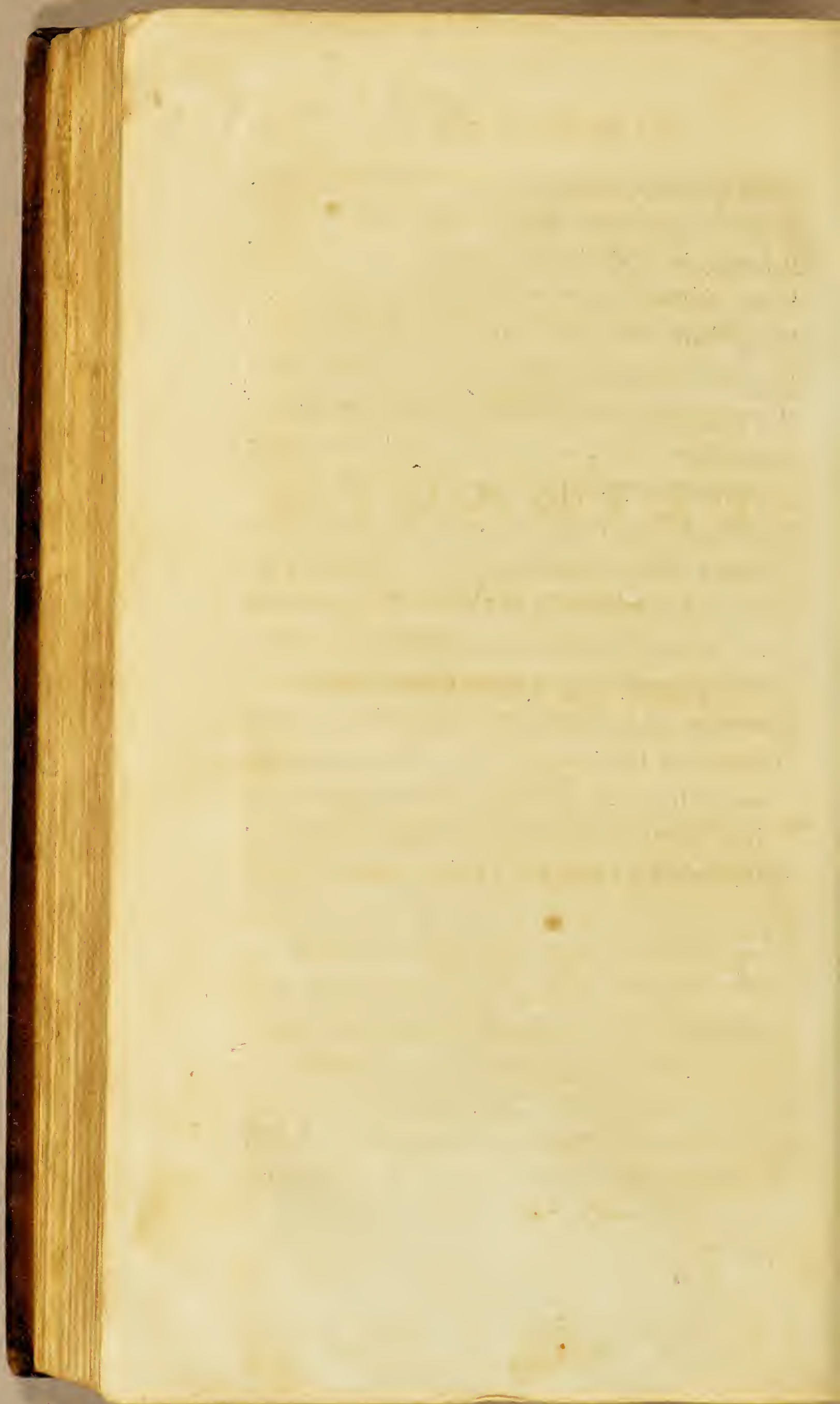
The Author, who was preserved unhurt, with his whole family, during the time of the sickness, gives, in his memoirs, a particular account of the many reasonings and fears which affected his mind, before he could come to a fixed conclusion, whether to stay and take his lot in the station in which God had placed him, or by leaving the city run the hazard of unsettling himself, and of losing his effects, which lay scattered amongst the merchants. At the earnest solicitations of

his brother, he had concluded to go, but being always crossed in this design, by several accidents, it came, one morning, as he expresses it, very warmly in his mind, whether these repeated disappointments were not intimations to him, that it was the will of Heaven he should not go: which was succeeded by a farther thought, that if this suggestion was from God, he was able effectually to preserve him, in the midst of all deaths and dangers that would surround him; and that if he attempted to secure himself, by fleeing from his habitation, and acting contrary to these intimations, which he believed to be divine, it was a kind of flying from God, who could cause his justice to overtake him, when, and where he thought fit.

But what finally fixed him in a resolution to stay, and cast himself entirely upon the protection and good pleasure of the Almighty, was the following corroborating circumstance. At a time when his thoughts were more than commonly serious upon this weighty subject, turning over the bible which lay before him, he cried out;——“ Well, I know not what to do; Lord, “ direct me!”——at that juncture, happening to stop, he cast his eye on the second verse of the 91st Psalm, and read to the 10th, as follows:——

“ I will

“ I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge, and
“ my fortress; my God, in him will I trust.
“ Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of
“ the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
“ He shall cover thee with his feathers, and
“ under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall
“ be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be
“ afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow
“ that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that
“ walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction
“ that wasteth at noon-day. A thousand shall
“ fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right
“ hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only
“ with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the
“ reward of the wicked. Because thou hast
“ made the Lord which is thy refuge, even the
“ most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil
“ befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh
“ thy dwelling, &c.”



SOME
EXTRACTS

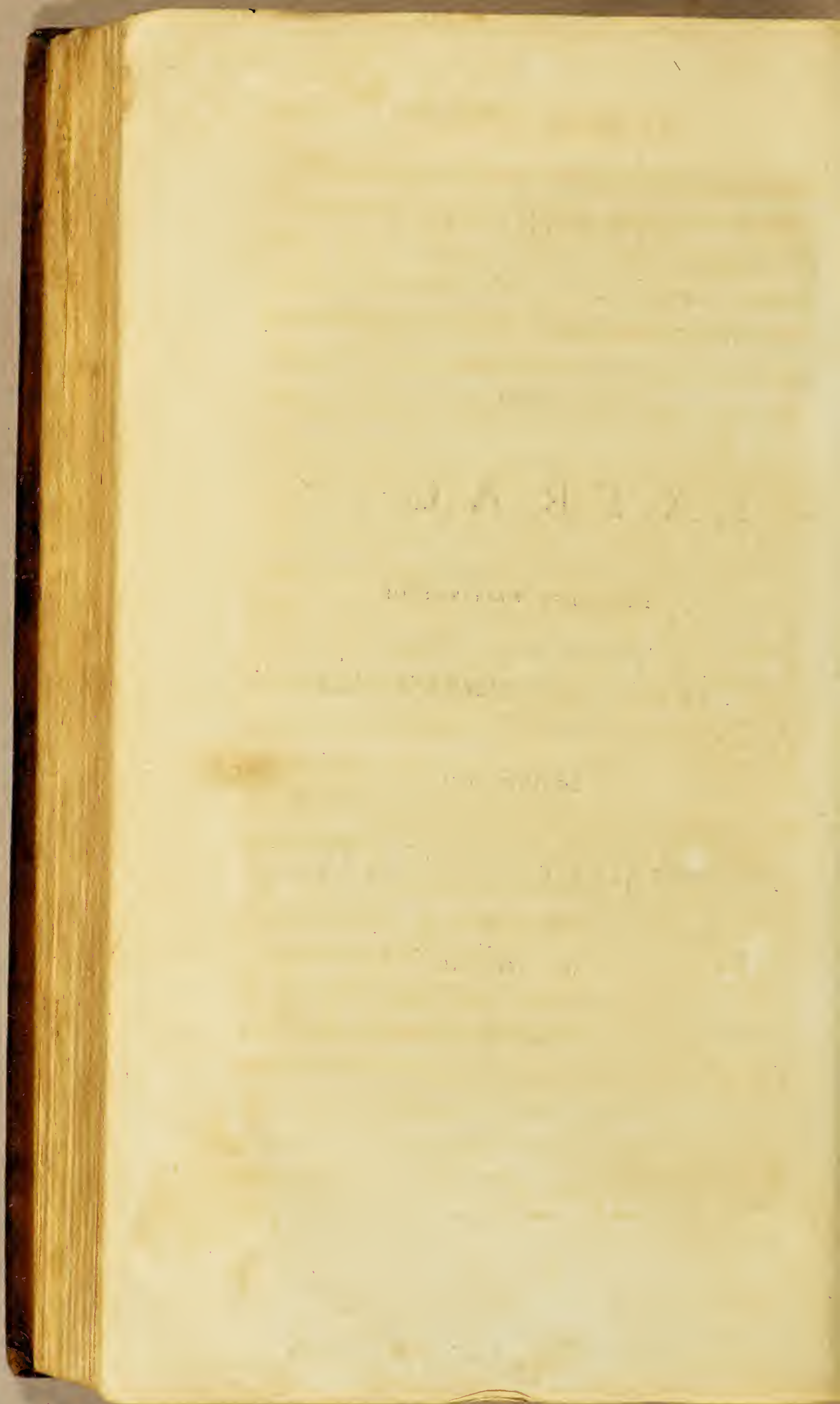
FROM THE WRITINGS OF

PIOUS AND EMINENT MEN,

AGAINST THE

ENTERTAINMENTS OF THE STAGE,

&c. &c. &c.



INTRODUCTION.

IN this age of extreme refinement and pleasurable pursuits, it appears to be almost hopeless, and may by some be deemed presumptuous, to attempt to draw the publick attention to any strictures, or to the sentiments of any persons whatever, against the favourite and much frequented Entertainments of the Stage. But as we live in times of free inquiry, and when candid examinations of all opinions, decently advanced, are recommended, perhaps the following sentiments of several great and good men, on the dangerous nature and tendency of dramattick amusements, may be perused with some degree of patience and attention. As, from the weakness of the human mind, its attachment to ancient opinion, and reverence for authority, there is wisdom in freely investigating some long established notions; and the result has often been a dissipation of error, and an establishment of truth; so it is of equal, if not of superior importance, to examine, with impartiality and care, many of our modes of practice, and established indulgences in life.

There

There is the greater necessity for this scrutiny of conduct, because action, more than speculation, forms the character ; and because our passions, depravity, and love of the world, peculiarly dispose us to an attachment to pernicious and pleasurable habits, supported by the authority and practice of numbers around us.

Encouraged by these considerations, the compiler has ventured to introduce the sentiments and testimonies of a few virtuous characters, against some indulgences, which at present meet with general approbation. The subject is far from being here largely discussed ; a few only of the most interesting views of it, are simply spread before the reader : yet it is presumed that, if justly delineated, they are of such importance as to claim the most serious attention. To such an examination they are readily submitted ; under a hope that, if conviction of their propriety should be the result, no attachment to former conduct, or present pleasure, will preponderate against the dictates of conscience, and that peace of mind, which is, beyond all comparison, a higher enjoyment than the most refined amusements of the world can bestow.

EXTRACTS,

EXTRACTS, &c.

FROM THE GREAT PASCALL.

“**T**HERE is nothing more capable of letting us into the knowledge of human misery, than an inquiry after the real cause of that perpetual hurry and confusion, in which we pass our lives. The soul is sent into the body, to be the sojourner of a few days. She knows this is but a stop, until she may embark for eternity; and that a small space is allowed her to prepare for the voyage. The main part of this space is ravished from her by the necessities of nature; and but a slender pittance left to her own disposal: and yet, this moment that remains, does so strangely oppress and perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it. She feels an intolerable burden, in being obliged to live with herself, and think of herself; and, therefore, her principal care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious moment pass away without reflection, by being amused with things that prevent her notice of its speed. This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the trifling diversions, amongst

amongst men; in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands, without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves; and, by getting rid of this small portion of life, to avoid that inward disgust and bitterness, which we should not fail to meet with, if we found leisure to descend into our own breasts.

“Having no infallible remedy against ignorance, misery, and death, we imagine that, at least, some respite, some shelter, may be found, by agreeing to banish them from our Meditation. This is the only natural comfort which mankind have been able to invent under their numerous calamities. But a most miserable comfort it proves; because it does not tend to the removal of these evils, but only to the concealment of them for a short season; and because, in thus concealing them, it hinders us from applying such proper means as would remove them. Thus, by a strange revolution in the nature of man, that grief and inward disquiet which he dreads as the greatest of sensible evils, is, in one respect, his greatest good; because it might contribute, more than all things besides, to the putting of him in a successful method of recovery. On the other hand, his diversions, which he seems to prize as his sovereign good, are

are indeed his greatest evil; because they are of all things the most effectual in making him negligent under his distemper: they do but amuse and beguile him; and, in the conclusion, lead him down blindfold into the grave. It is indeed one of the miracles of Christianity, that by reconciling man to God, it restores him to his own good opinion; that it makes him able to bear the sight of himself; and in some cases, renders solitude and silence more agreeable than all the intercourse and action of mankind. Nor is it by fixing man in his own person, that these wonderful effects are produced; it is by carrying him to God, and by supporting him under the sense of his miseries, with the hopes of an assured and complete deliverance in a better life."



FROM THE PRINCE OF CONTI.

——“THE call which men have for diversion, is not by far so great as is thought, and it consists more in imagination, or in custom, than in a real necessity. Those who are employed in bodily labour, have only need of a bare cessation from it. Those who are employed in affairs toilsome to the mind, and but little laborious to the body, have need to recollect themselves from that disposition

disposition which those sort of employments naturally cause, and not to dissipate themselves yet more, by diversions which extremely engage the mind. It is a jest to fancy that one has need to pass three hours in filling the mind with follies at a play. Those who find in themselves this need, ought to look on it, not as a natural weakness, but as a vice of custom, which they must cure by serious employment."

———"If the soul abandon itself to false pleasures, it loses the relish of spiritual ones, and finds nothing but disgust for the word of God. When one feeds himself with the vain pleasures of the world, the spiritual senses become stupified, and incapable of relishing, or understanding, the things of God. Now, among the pleasures of the world, which extinguish the love of the word of God, it may be said, that plays and romances hold the first rank; because there is nothing more opposed to truth; and the Spirit of God, being a spirit of truth, can have no part with the vanities of the world."

———"Plays and romances not only indispose the soul for all acts of religion and piety; but they give it a disgust, in some measure, to all
serious

serious and ordinary actions. As nothing is represented in them but gallantries, or extraordinary adventures, and the discourses are far distant from such as are used in serious affairs, one insensibly takes from them a romantick disposition of mind: the head is filled with heroes and heroines; and women, seeing the adorations which in them are given to their sex, have that sort of life so much impressed on their minds, that the affairs of their family and of common life, become insupportable to them; and when they return to their houses, with minds thus evaporated and filled with these follies, they find every thing there disagreeable, and especially their husbands, who, being taken up with their affairs, are not always in the humour of paying them those ridiculous complaisances which are given to women in plays, in romances, and in the romantick life."

—"Those deceive themselves extremely, who think that plays make no ill impression on them, because they do not find them excite any formed evil desire.—There are many degrees before one comes to an entire corruption of mind; and it is always extremely hurtful to the soul, to destroy the ramparts which secured it from temptation.

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“ One does not begin to fall when the fall becomes sensible ; the fallings of the soul are slow, they have preparations and progressions ; and it often happens, that we are overcome by temptations, only by our having weakened ourselves in occasions which seemed of no importance : it being certain, that he who despises little things, shall fall by little and little.”

——“ It must not be imagined that the wicked maxims, of which plays are full, are not hurtful, because people do not go there to form their sentiments, but to divert themselves ; for they do not fail of making impressions, notwithstanding, without being perceived.--For instance, the opinion that the chimera of honour is so great a good, that it must be preserved, even at the expense of life, is what produces the brutal rage of the gentlemen of France. If those who fight a duel were never spoken of but as fools and madmen—as indeed they are ; if that phantom of honour which is their idol, were never represented but as a chimera and a folly ; if care were taken never to form any image of revenge, but as of a mean and cowardly action ; the resentment which men feel upon an affront would be infinitely weaker ; but that which exasperates and renders it the more lively,

lively, is the false impression, that there is cowardice in bearing an affront. Now, it cannot be denied that plays, which are full of these evil maxims, do greatly contribute to fortify that impression; because the mind being by them transported, and entirely out of itself, instead of correcting those sentiments, abandons itself to them without resistance, and delights to feel the motions they inspire, which dispose it to produce the like upon occasion."

———"God does not impute to us the coldness which proceeds from the withdrawing of his light, or merely from the heaviness of this body; but, no doubt, he imputes to us that to which we have contributed by our negligence, and our vain diversions. It is his will that we should esteem nothing so much as the gracious gift which he has made us of his love; and that we should be careful to preserve it by giving it nourishment. This command he has intimated to us in the persons of the priests in the ancient law, whom he ordains always to maintain the fire on the altar, and to take care to put wood upon it, every day in the morning. This altar is the heart of man, and every Christian is the priest; who ought to be careful to nourish the

the fire of charity on the altar of his heart, by putting wood every day upon it; that is to say, maintaining it by the meditation of divine things, and by exercises of piety. Now, if those who go to plays have yet any sense of piety, they cannot disown that plays deaden, and tend to entirely extinguish devotion; so that they should not doubt, God judges them extremely guilty, for having made so little account of his love, that, instead of nourishing and endeavouring to augment it, they have not feared to extinguish it by their vain diversions; and that he will impute to them as a great sin, the abatement or the loss of their love to him. For if a dissipation of the goods of the world and of earthly riches, by luxury and gaming, is no little sin, what must be judged of a dissipation of the goods of grace, and of that precious treasure the scripture speaks of, which we ought to purchase, by the loss of all the goods, and all the pleasures of this life?"



FROM CHIEF JUSTICE HALE.

"Beware of too much recreation. Some bodily exercise is necessary, for sedentary men especially; but let it not be too frequent, nor too long.

long. Gaming, taverns, and plays, as they are pernicious, and corrupt youth, so if they had no other fault, they are justly to be declined, in respect of their excessive expense of time, and habituating men to idleness and vain thoughts, and disturbing passions and symptoms, when they are past, as well as while they are used."



CLARKE, in his essay on study, speaking of plays and romances, says,—"By what I have
 " seen of them, they are generally very indif-
 " creetly and foolishly written, in a way proper to
 " recommend vanity and wickedness, rather than
 " discredit them; they have a strong tendency
 " to corrupt and debauch the mind with silly,
 " mischievous notions of love and honour, and
 " other things relating to the conduct of life."



ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON, on the subject of plays, says,—"They are intolerable, and not
 " fit to be permitted in a civilized, much less a
 " Christian nation: they do most notoriously mi-
 " nister to vice and infidelity: by their profane-
 " ness, they are apt to instil bad principles into

“ the minds of men, and to lessen that awe and
 “ reverence which all men ought to have of God
 “ and religion ; and by their lewdness, they
 “ teach vice, and are apt to infect the minds of
 “ men, and dispose them to lewd and dissolute
 “ practices.”



THE FOLLOWING ARE TAKEN FROM THE
 WORKS OF WILLIAM LAW.

——“ THE pleasures and diversions of people are certain means for judging of the state of their minds : nothing can please or affect us, but what is according to our nature, and which finds something within us that is suitable to itself. Had we not inward dispositions of tenderness and compassion, we should not find ourselves softened with miserable objects. In like manner, had we not in our nature lively feeds of those disorders which are acted upon the stage ; were there not some inward corruption, that finds itself gratified by the irregular passions that are there represented, we should find no more pleasure in the stage, than blind men find in pictures. If impure speeches, if wanton amours, if wild passions, and immoral rant, can
 give

give us any delight, is it not past all doubt, that we have something of all these disorders in our nature? (*and that we nourish and strengthen them by those gratifications?*)”

——“ You own that God has called you to great purity of conversation; that you are forbid all *foolish discourse*, and *filthy jesting*, as expressly as you are forbid swearing; and that you are told, to *let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*; and yet you go to a house of corrupt communication; you hire persons to entertain you with ribaldry, profaneness, rant, and impurity of discourse, who are to present you with poisonous sentiments, and lewd imaginations, dressed up in elegant language, and to make wicked, vain, and impure discourse more lively and delightful, than you could possibly have it in any ill company. Is not this sinning with a high hand, and grossly offending against the plainest precepts of scripture?”

——“ There is no doctrine of our blessed Saviour that more concerns all Christians, or is more essential to their salvation, than this:——
“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall
“see God.”——Now take the stage in its best state, when some admired tragedy is upon it;

are the extravagant passions of distracted lovers, the impure ravings of inflamed heroes, the joys and torments of love, and refined descriptions of lusts—are the indecent actions, the amorous transports, the wanton address of the actors, which make so great a part of the most sober and modest tragedies—are these things consistent with this Christian doctrine of purity of heart?”

——“As prejudices, the force of education, the authority of numbers, the way of the world, the example of great names, may make people believe; so the same causes may make people act, against all sense and reason, and be guilty of practices which are utterly inconsistent with the purity of their Religion.”

——“All people who enter into these houses of entertainment, or contribute the smallest mite towards them, must look on themselves, as having been, so far, friends to the most powerful instruments of sensuality; and to be guilty of contributing to an open and publick exercise of splendid impurity and profaneness. When we encourage any good design, either with our consent, our money, or presence, we are apt to take a great deal of merit to ourselves; we presently conclude that we are partakers of
all

all that is good and praise-worthy in it, of all the benefit that arises from it, because we are contributors towards it. A man does not think that he has no share in some publick charity, because he is but one in ten thousand that contributes towards it; (*or because it would go forward, without his contribution ;*) but if it be a religious charity, and attended with great and happy effects, his conscience tells him, that he is a sharer of all that great good to which he contributed. Now, let this teach us how we ought to judge of the guilt of encouraging any thing that is bad, either with our consent, our money, or our presence. - We must not consider how much our single part contributes towards it, how much less we contribute than several thousands of other people, (*nor that the work would go forward, if we did not at all contribute to it ;*) but we must look at the whole thing in itself ; and whatever there is of evil in it, or whatever evil arises from it, we must charge ourselves with a share of the whole guilt of so great an evil."

——“ People of fashion and quality have great advantage above the vulgar ; their condition and education give them a liveliness and brightness of parts, from whence one might

justly expect a more exalted virtue. How comes it then, that we see as ill morals, as little religious wisdom, and as great disorders among them, as among the most rude, uneducated part of the world? It is because *the extreme politeness of their lives, their course of diversions and amusements, and their ways of spending their time*, as much extinguish the wisdom and light of religion, as the grossness and ignorance of the dullest part of the world.—Any way of life *that darkens our minds, that misemploys our understanding, that fills us with a trifling spirit, that disorders our passions, that separates us from the spirit of God*, is the same certain road to destruction, whether it arise from stupid sensuality, rude ignorance, or polite pleasures. Had any one, therefore, the power of an apostle, or the tongue of an angel, it would be well employed, in exposing, and dissuading from, those ways of life, which wealth, corruption, and extreme politeness, have brought among us. We indeed only call them diversions; but they do the whole work of idolatry and infidelity, and fill people with so much blindness and hardness of heart, that they neither live by wisdom, nor feel the want of it, but are content to play away their lives with scarce any attention to the approaching scenes of death, judgment, and eternity.”

CONCLUSIVE

CONCLUSIVE ADDRESS to the READER.

IT must be evident to every sober and unprejudiced mind, that the sentiments of these virtuous and enlightened men, on the corrupting influence, and the fatal amusements, of the theatre, merit the most serious and attentive consideration: and to some minds, it is apprehended, they will appear to be solid and awakening reflections.

If it be true, that many profane, indecent, and irreligious sentiments are to be found in the works of dramatick writers, and these sentiments coloured with the softest names, and recommended on the stage by the most captivating characters and action;—if the senses and imagination are so charmed with the elegance of the scenery, the richness of the dresses, the power of the musick, the address of the performers, and the gaiety and splendour of the whole surrounding scene, as to deprive the mind of sober reflection, and agitate it too much for receiving benefit from moral and rational instruction;—if these passionate and fascinating exhibitions injure the delicacy of our best feelings, and gradually weaken our abhorrence of immoral indulgencies; if they frequently break down the ramparts of our virtue, and lay us open to the inroads and government
of

of vice and folly ;—if they chiefly address the inferior powers of our nature, our senses, imagination, and passions, and regale them with such high-seasoned enjoyments, as too often vitiate our moral taste, and not only indispose, but give us a disgust to every composition that is not much refined, and especially to the Holy Scriptures, and those sober and religious studies and engagements, which form the great duties of life, and promote our happiness here and hereafter ;—if the persons who attend these places of diversion, do neither look for, nor receive, any serious impressions from them, but, on the contrary, often find their minds enervated, and accompanied with a vain and romantick spirit ;—if they occupy, in the perusal and exhibition, in the preparation for them and languor after them, so much of our precious time, as to prevent us from attending to necessary and important concerns ; and thus also superinduce habits of indolence and dissipation ;—if they abound with flattering pictures of the world, and present, to the youthful mind especially, such highly finished and captivating views of human life and happiness, as are seldom or never realized ; and hence, besides an aversion or indifference to the ordinary duties and affairs of mankind, not unfrequently produce deep anxiety, disappointment, and discontent through time ; if it be of importance to preserve the principles and manners of the rising generation pure and untainted,

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ed, to prevent them from being governed by their imagination and passions, and to encourage in them modesty, humility, moderation, and a reverence for piety and virtue ;—if religion and goodness must be supported by constant care and vigilance, and our preservation from evil depends on our avoiding temptations, and praying daily for Divine assistance against it ;—if many great and good men have borne publick testimony against the pernicious tendency of these amusements ; and if numbers of serious and worthy characters of all denominations, have been convinced of the evils connected with them, and thought it their duty to avoid and discourage the attendance and support of them ;—if Christianity teaches us to consider ourselves as strangers and pilgrims, travelling towards a better country ; and admonishes us not to love the world, nor to be conformed to its vain customs and fashions, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, and to maintain a steady self-denial against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life :—if these are the common effects and consequences of dramattick entertainments, and truths which cannot fairly be controverted, can we hesitate to acknowledge, that they are of the highest moment, and that it is incumbent upon us not to expose our principles and virtue to the influence of temptations, which are the more dangerous, as they are highly pleasing, little suspected, and seldom opposed ?

What

What advantages can they yield us, that will compensate for the loss or hazard of interests so important? All the pleasures, and all the refinements which their warmest votaries have ever found in them, are indeed a poor recompense for the corruption, extravagance, and misery which they have too frequently sown the seeds of, and produced in human life.

It becomes us then, as rational beings, as Christians, who are called to renounce the vanities of this transient precarious state, and who have a permanent and better world in view, to assert the dignity of our nature, and to act conformably to the importance of our destination. A few fleeting years will bring us all to the verge of an awful scene, when the vain diversions and pastimes, which are now so highly prized, will appear in their true light, a most lamentable abuse of that precious time and talent with which we have been entrusted, for the great purpose of working out our soul's salvation. At that solemn period, the great business of Religion, a pious and virtuous life, dedicated to the love and service of God, will appear of inestimable value, and in the highest degree worthy of the concern and pursuit of reasonable beings. Happy will it be for us, if we become wise in time, take up the cross to all ensnaring pleasures, for the few remaining days of our lives, and steadily persevere, under the Divine Aid, in fulfilling the various

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ous duties assigned us, and in making suitable returns to the Author of all good, for the unmerited blessings which he hath bountifully bestowed upon us. In these exalted employments, we shall experience the noblest pleasure, and feel no want of empty and injurious entertainments, to occupy our minds, or to fill up our time. In the scenes and productions of nature, and in the useful works of art; in the faithful narratives of human life, and the descriptions of interesting objects; in the endearments of social and domestick intercourse; in acts of charity and benevolence; and in the pleasing reflections of an upright and self-approving mind, we shall perceive also abundant sources of innocent refreshment and true cheerfulness, as well as the means of enlarging our understandings, and improving our hearts.

May those persons, therefore, who have doubts respecting the propriety of indulging themselves in theatrical amusements, and, indeed, may all who read these lines, seriously consider the hazard of such indulgences, and give the subject that attention which its importance demands. May those especially, who are convinced of their dangerous nature and tendency, reject with abhorrence the solicitations of appetite and pleasure, and the fallacious reasonings which are often adduced in their support. May we never be imposed on by the common, but delusive sentiments, that moral and religious improvement is to be acquired from
such

such impure mixtures ; and that the literary merit, and accurate knowledge of the human heart, which are displayed in many parts of dramatick works, will atone for the fatal wounds which innocence, delicacy, and religion, too frequently suffer from these performances. But being convinced that depraved nature will ever select what is most congenial to itself ; and that the pleasures derived from refined composition, and the exhibitions of taste and elegance, may be purchased at too dear a rate, let us resolutely and uniformly oppose what we believe to be evil, however it may be arrayed ; and do our utmost to discourage, by our example and influence, those powerful and destructive engines of dissipation, profaneness and corruption.

THE END.

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